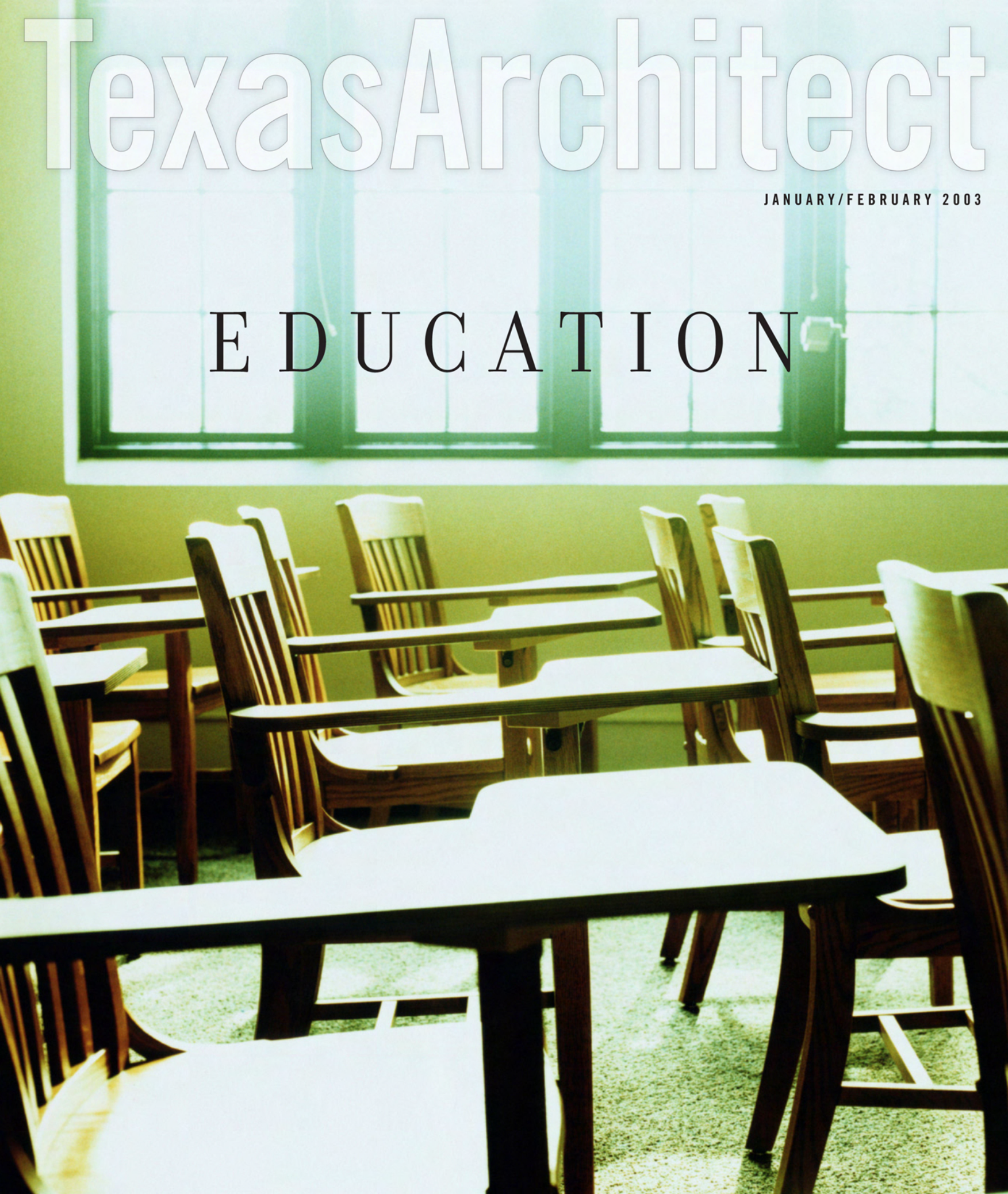
TexasArchitect

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2003

EDUCATION



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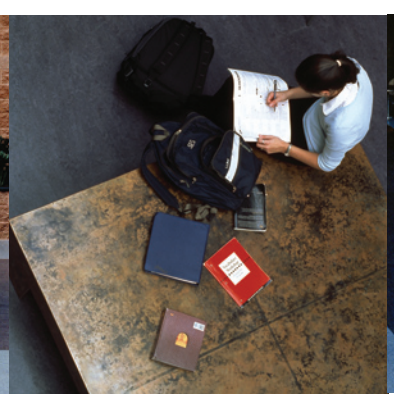

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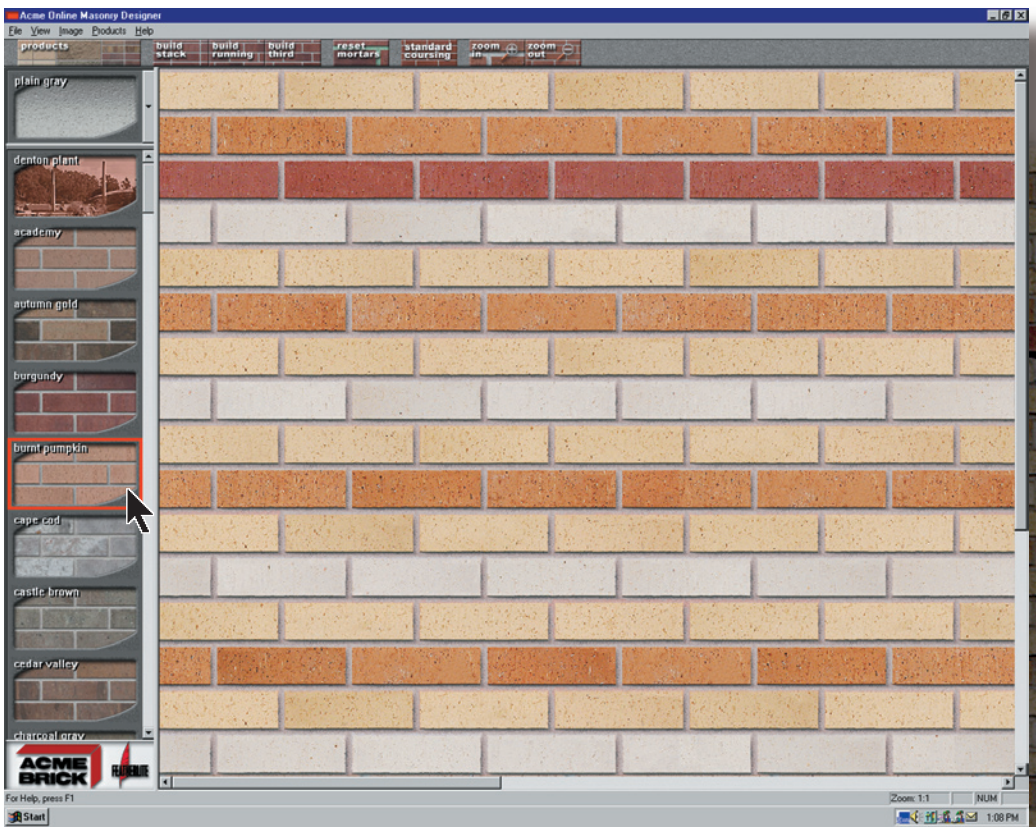

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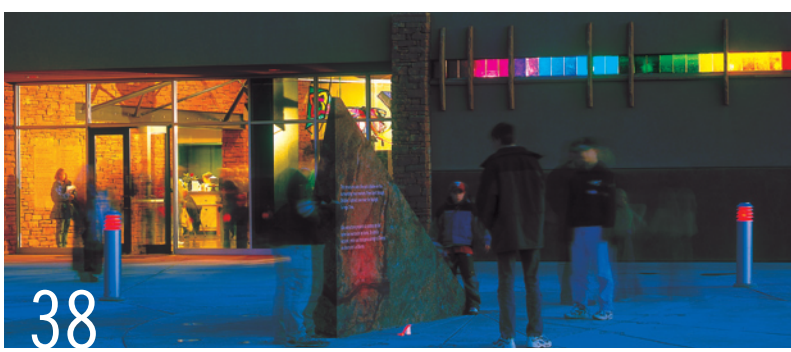

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July/August 2003 – The "Real" Texas
(deadline: February 14)

November/December 2003 – Green
(deadline: June 16)

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Elegantly Functional

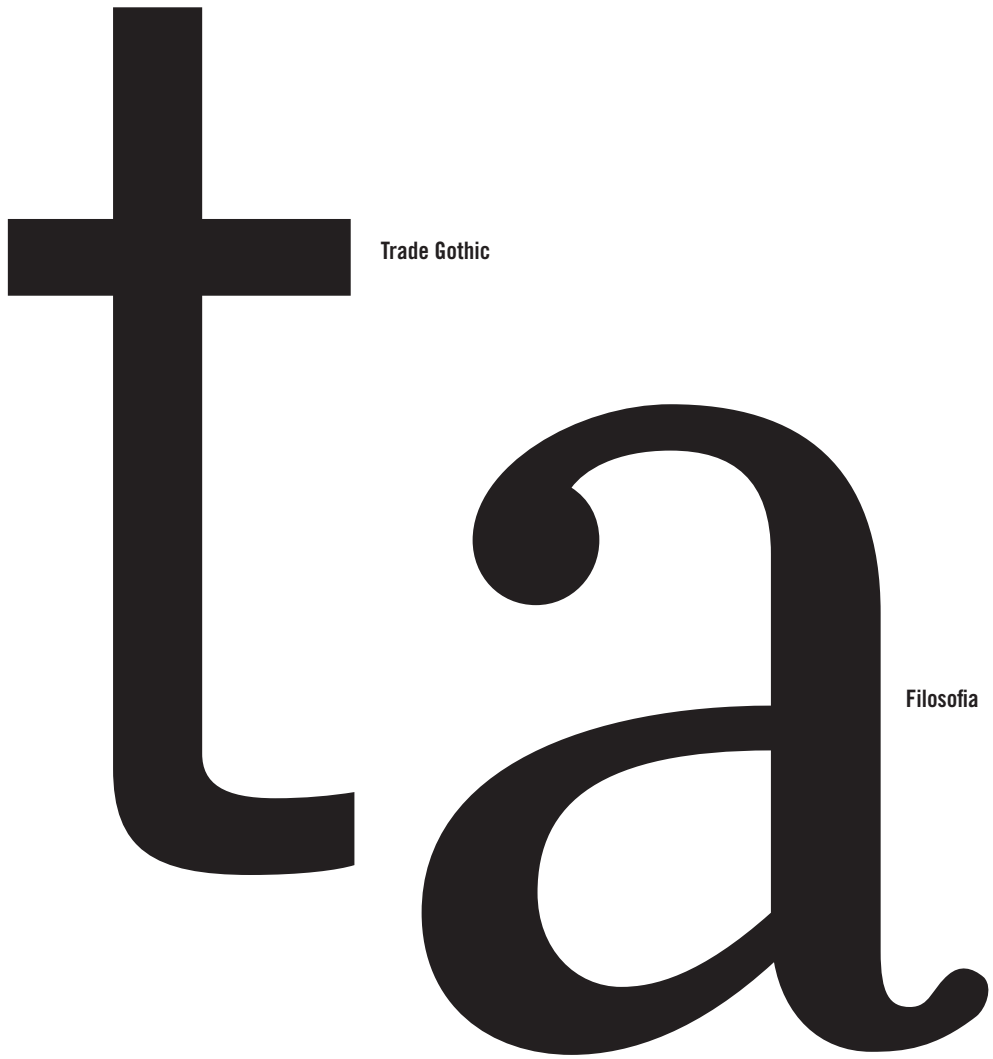
A new typeface for *TA* improves both form and function.

'EVERYTHING IS AN EXPERIMENT," OBSERVED Tibor Kalman, the late graphic designer and sagacious troublemaker who also said, "Rules are good. Break them." Kalman counseled an endless campaign against complacency, whether on the printed page or in the corporate boardroom. His persistent search for new solutions to old problems inspires everyone who strives toward innovation and creativity.

This issue of *Texas Architect* culminates the latest quest to produce a better magazine. Within these pages are the results of work by the *TA* staff – in particular by Adam Fortner, our youthful and irrepressible art director – to enhance the magazine's visual expression and increase its readability. The most notable change is the "body" type, the typeface that you're reading right now. The new typeface is Filosofia, a recent digital update of the classical font Bodoni. Readers sensitive to the subtleties of typography will notice that our new body type has serifs whereas our former Trade Gothic was a sans-serif font. (Trade Gothic hasn't vanished altogether. See the "Texas Architect" nameplate on the cover, the headlines in the "News" section, and the "Editor's Note" standing head on this page.) The difference is minuscule, yet the effect can be great. *TA* will use two fonts within the Filosofia family, Filosofia Regular for body type (see the illustration at lower right) and Filosofia Grand for headlines (see the "Elegantly Functional" head atop this column).

"I was looking for a serif to increase the readability for the longer stories," Fortner explains when asked why he switched from a sans-serif body type. In recent months he experimented with sample layouts, each using a different serif face, before deciding upon Filosofia, designed in 1996 by Zuzana Licko, co-founder of the digital type foundry Emigré and one of the best designers of type since the introduction of the Apple Macintosh in 1984. Serif type increases readability by assisting the eye to recognize complete words instead of individual letter forms, and Filosofia does the job beautifully. Fortner chose Filosofia specifically because of the visual contrast among its characters, that is, more bold and thin strokes which lends an air of elegance to the typeface.

TA's redesign involves more than a new body type. Fortner has also added subheads and "pull quotes" to the feature layouts as part of his overall objective in enlivening the pages. "It breathes more life into the design," he says, adding, "I also did it to offer more flexibility. It gives me more opportunities."



Another change is apparent only if one reads the fine print on the opposite page, and that's a reshuffling of *TA*'s roster of contributing editors. I was very pleased to invite two long-standing members of the TSA Publications Committee to write articles on a regular basis. Despite my assurance that neither will be paid for their efforts, Lawrence Connolly, AIA, of Austin, and Ed Soltero, AIA, of El Paso, have accepted my invitation.

All of our contributing editors help make *Texas Architect* a magazine that is admired and respected across the nation. No other regional architecture publication consistently achieves the level of excellence readers enjoy when they pick up *TA*.

We must be doing something right because *Texas Architect* won a 2002 Katie Award for Best Magazine within a six-state region. The competition is sponsored annually by the Press Club of Dallas and was juried last year by the Atlanta Press Club. Other finalists in the category were Southwest Airlines' *Spirit* magazine and *Oklahoma Today*. Among their comments, the jurors said: "The design of *Texas Architect*, like its editorial voice, is at once forward-thinking and knowledgeable, calm without being cold. An excellent publication throughout."

Part of Associate Publisher Judey Dozeto's marketing strategy for *TA* is positioning the magazine as a regional publication, partly by entering competitions beyond those for trade journals.

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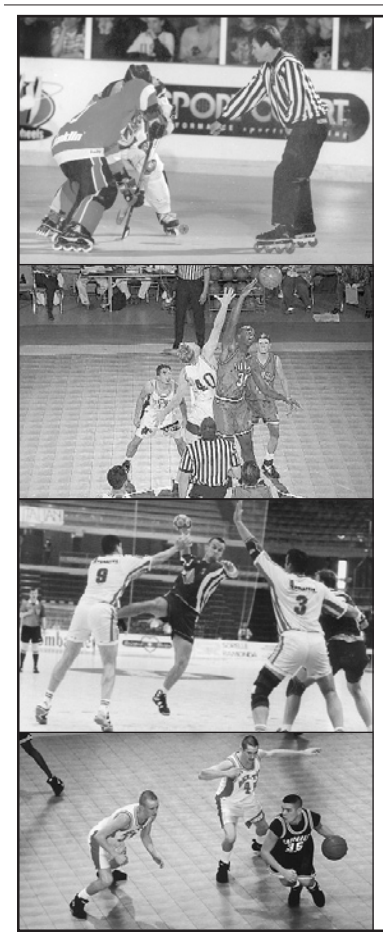

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'Paralysis of Analysis' on Trinity Plan

Thank you for publishing Frederick Steiner's recent article on the Trinity River. (See "Can Urban Design Heal the Trinity?" in *TA* November/December 2002, p. 22.) Although we are now going through a "paralysis of analysis" stage, the more the river is discussed, the more we can keep the people of Dallas focused on the fact that the Trinity River could be converted into a significant catalyst for redevelopment of Dallas' inner city.

In the early 1900s, after the flood of 1908, George Kessler originated some excellent urban plans for some parts of Dallas. However, I would like to remind you that the Kessler Plan for the Trinity River has given us what we have today—an ugly, man-made canalized river in the middle of a one-half-mile-wide floodway almost completely bare of trees and separated from the urban fiber of the city by 35-foot-high earthen levees. In the 71 years since the construction of the channel and levees that provide flood protection to West Dallas, Oak Cliff, the Market Center, the industrial districts, and parts of downtown, no one, including the architects of the Lew Sterrett Justice Center, have had the foresight or the guts to design their buildings with front doors facing toward the river.

Halff Associates has been working to "heal the Trinity" for 30 years. In the last five years we have had more than 100 public presentations and meetings with the stakeholders. The members of the AIA Dallas advisory panel – whose report Dean Steiner quoted extensively – did not have the benefit of all of those meetings, nor did they come to understand the river and all the hydrologic, socioeconomic, and urban design constraints.

I would like to briefly summarize Halff Associates' responses to issues raised in Dean Steiner's article, issues that stem from AIA Dallas' criticism of the Trinity River Corridor Master Implementation Plan (MIP). These are made from the point of view of our firm, which has been involved in much of the planning work to date in the Trinity Corridor as specified in the MIP.

• In regard to the proposed "off-channel" lakes: The Dallas floodway is first and foremost a flood-carrying structure, therefore any proposal for development in the floodway must be balanced with flood control and conveyance issues. As a result of those constraints, the lakes are positioned off channel and protected from the two-year flood flows to allow significantly improved water quality, reduced siltation and maintenance, as well as a higher usage. Also, the article questions "why not smaller lakes and wetlands that make use of the natural channel?" There is no natural channel because the floodway is man-made. On-channel lakes will fill with sediment very quickly and would require significant expenditures in dredging and disposal of sediments.

• In regard to the proposed tollway/parkway: AIA Dallas states that the tollway becomes "an inner liner isolating the park" and that the road elements "extinguish conventional recreational uses from occurring in any meaningful way." In fact, the Trinity Parkway plan proposed by North Texas Tollway Authority provides up to 13 programmed access points to the park for vehicles and pedestrians, and 17 additional access points for bicycles and pedestrians. Further, the tollway authority may consider police-controlled access locations directly from the parkway into the park for special events. These types of high-capacity access points would make the road an asset to very large public gatherings in the floodway park.

• In regard to the AIA Dallas' recommendation that city officials consult with additional experts: Inviting a team of urban designers to determine a "grand vision" for the Trinity Corridor appears to give carte blanche to revisiting old decisions and evaluating any and all changes to plans that have been developed with considerable public input over several years. We are very concerned that this will effectively stop all progress on the Trinity project for a significant period of time, and incur additional costs to Dallas citizens (estimated at $100 million per year) due to inflation and congestion delays. We question that following the AIA recommendation might in the end confirm the words of Elliot that "the end of all exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time."

José Novoa, P.E.
Chairman, Halff Associates, Inc.
Dallas

CORRECTIONS Due to a production error the bottom section of a photo was inadvertently cropped in the "Terminus" feature on Fort Worth's Main Street (November/December 2002, p. 60). The error also caused the photo credit to be dropped. The photo was by Hester + Hardaway.

Raiford Stripling Would Be Proud

Thank you for including San Augustine in your list of "Texas' Best Places." (See "Small Towns," p. 8 in the "Texas' Best Places" special feature in September/October 2002). We appreciate Gerald Moorhead's kind words about our historic town.

It is a shame that Raiford Stripling, AIA, is not alive to read and see the home featured that he restored to its glory for the Cartwrights.

Jerry Payne
San Augustine

Cheaper Ways to be 'Green'

Gary Olp, AIA, presented a fairly balanced analysis of LEED in his article that appeared in your Special Section on "green" building. (See *TA* November/December 2002, p. 46.) However, the article was incorrect in stating that LEED is the "federal standard for environmental performance in non-residential buildings." The Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy, as well as the National Institute of Standards and Technology, have issued various other programs and standards that would more likely qualify as a "federal standard," since they were issued by federal agencies.

My understanding is that the United States Green Building Council (USGBC) is a consortium of various public and private interest groups. It does not receive tax dollars or federal support as far as I am aware, but rather depends on individual membership dues and fees for subscriptions, training, and so forth.

I've been told that the cost of hiring someone to document all the "green" materials and components in a building adds as much as 10 to 20 percent to the project architect's budget. Consider whether that money spent to pay for a "certified LEED professional" could be used instead to pay for "greener" building components, such as solar photovoltaics, thereby making the project more sustainable.

Marcia P. Roberts, AIA
LCRA Energy Services
Austin

Gary Olp responds: *Certainly, there are costs for acquiring LEED certification. A LEED certified professional is required to maintain USGBC membership and must pay for the LEED examination. In addition, the client incurs additional expense for preparation of a materials list as required for the certification submission. However, rarely would certification lead to a 10 to 20 percent increase in a project's cost. I can see that happening only if a designer naively sought LEED certification without first researching the process—call it a learning curve. In contrast, a designer who is experienced in sustainable projects and has been through the LEED process before can complete the required documentation with a minimal increase in billable hours. Furthermore, the USGBC is currently working to streamline the submittal process to lessen the financial burden on all members of the building team.*

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(below, top) As the centerpiece of the main retablo, the figure of the crucified Christ will be surrounded by statues of the four Christian evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. (below, bottom) Artisans from Mexico City at work detailing some of the decorative pieces which will adorn the retablos. Several craftsmen will travel to San Antonio to help assemble the finished works, scheduled to be unveiled in late March; photos courtesy the Rev. David Garcia of San Fernando Cathedral.

Restored San Fernando Sanctuary Adds Hand-Carved Abodes for Saints

SAN ANTONIO For the first time in nearly 175 years, San Fernando Cathedral will once again have a proper home for some of her most cherished saints. The cathedral, which began construction in 1738 and was later enlarged in 1868, has often been referred to as the center of the City of San Antonio. The cathedral provides a fitting backdrop to many of San Antonio's most spectacular festivities, including the 10-day springtime Fiesta celebration as well as religious ceremonies during Easter and Christmas. A new series of retablos, under construction in Mexico City, is part of a $17 million restoration, renovation, and addition to the 264-year-old cathedral that sits on the Main Plaza in downtown San Antonio.

The retablos, now being hand-carved from Mexican cedar by artisans in Mexico City, are patterned after the elaborate altar boxes brought to this continent by Spanish missionaries in the sixteenth century. (Retablos commonly seen today—depictions of saints painted on tin—are simplified versions which evolved from the European altar boxes during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Mexico.) It is not known when the first retablos were installed in the oldest portion of San Fernando Cathedral, only that the three were destroyed during the fire of 1828. Though no images of the retablos are in existence, there are portions of a burnt support system that suggest their location.

The new retablos, which will house six saints along with a near life-sized carving of Jesus Christ on the cross, are scheduled to arrive at the cathedral in early January. The largest of the retablos will house statuary of the four apostles, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Composed in two architectural tiers, this central retablo will be 22 feet tall. The two smaller retablos will be placed in each of the two transepts. One will be dedicated to La Virgen de la Candelaria, patron saint of the Canary Islands. (The city's original settlers arrived in 1731 from the Canary Islands and founded the town they called La Villa de San Fernando.) The other smaller retablo will represent La Virgen de Guadalupe, known as Patroness of the Americas.

The retablos, which are being hand carved by artisans in Mexico, will be shipped to San Antonio in sections and assembled by craftsmen on site. Some of the original artisans who worked on the piece in Mexico will be coming to San Antonio to assist in the re-construction of the retablos and to apply a gold-leaf finish to the carving. The work is scheduled to take 8 to 10 weeks. The finished works are to be unveiled during a rededication ceremony in late March of 2003.

Though local media coverage has focused on the much anticipated arrival of the retablos, other work being done to the cathedral has not been without controversy. There are many people including preservationists and churchgoers who believe that the restoration will not only alter the historic character of the sanctuary, but will also change forever the way Mass and other sacred rituals are observed and performed in one of the oldest cathedrals in the nation. Examples of the changes include the relocation of the baptismal font and the altar table, with the latter being moved some 30 feet closer to the seating and repositioned to face the congregation for the first time.

Less controversial measures also being taken to ensure that the cathedral structure will stand for another 100 years, including a major cleaning of the exterior stonework, cleaning of the stained glass windows, and replacing the protective glass that has long distorted the figuring and light intake provided by the decorative windows. In addition, several ceiling lights, installed during a restoration in the 1970s, have been removed for possible use in a new building being constructed on nearby church property; confessionals have been removed from the sanctuary vestibule and a new confessional space added in another portion of the church; and new glass partition walls will be placed at the left and right vestibules to aid in circulation and in the heating and cooling of the main portion of the sanctuary. The rededication of the restored sanctuary is tentatively set for late spring.

Despite the many changes underway at San Fernando Cathedral, one constant is the presence of the presumed remains of William Barret Travis, David Crockett, and Jim Bowie. Though the actual identity of those buried in the cathedral is unknown, the plaque honoring the fallen heroes of the Battle of the Alamo will remain undisturbed.

As project architect, the architecture firm of Rafferty, Rafferty and Tollefson in St. Paul, Minnesota, is working with local associate firms Fisher Heck Architects and Sprinkle Robey Architects to accomplish the multi-phase project which Father David Garcia, rector of the cathedral, has referred to as a lesson in restoration, renovation, and respect.

TRACY ANDERSON

Tracy Anderson is currently working toward the completion of her Master of Architecture in architectural studies at the University of Texas at Austin.

AIA Fort Worth Awards 11 Projects

FORT WORTH The local AIA chapter presented awards to 11 projects in its 2002 Excellence in Architecture Awards. Four firms split the six awards given to built projects, with the balance of awards going to student work.

Honor Awards went to Godley High School in Godley by Hahnfeld Hoffer Stanford; Tarrant Regional Water District Administration Building in Fort Worth by Gideon Toal; and William E. & Jean Jones Tucker Technology Center at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth by Hahnfeld Hoffer Stanford and Ellerbee Beckett.

Merit Awards were presented to George Dawson Middle School in Southlake by VLK Architects; American Airlines September 11, 2001 Memorial in Fort Worth by VLK Architects; The Cotton Creek and Willow Tree Learning Center in Grand Prairie by Gaylen Howard Laing Architect, Inc.

In the Student Projects category, Honor Awards went to Andorra, re-designing the valley Andorra, Spain/France by Rod Bennett, Chris McNaughton, and Orlando Pizarro, a team representing the University of Texas at Arlington and La Universidad Politecnica de Catalunya—Barcelona; and Cultural/Visitor's Center at Chaco Canyon by Chris Hill. Winning Merit Awards were American Indian Cultural Centre in New Mexico by Bradley James Sliva; Computer Tables for Architecture Faculty at the Architecture Building at the University of Texas at Arlington by Jeancarlo Saenz; Unbounded Limits/Long Island City Gateway at Queens Plaza, New York City, by Andrej Gajdos.

The design awards jury was comprised of Bernie Cywinski, FAIA, a principal of Bohlin Cywinski Jackson; Nonya Grenader, FAIA, an architecture professor at Rice University in Houston; and Robert Meckfessel, AIA, a principal of dsgn associates in Dallas.

Godley High School

Tarrant Regional Water District Administration Building

William E. & Jean Jones Tucker Technology Center

George Dawson Middle School

American Airlines September 11, 2001 Memorial

The Cotton Creek and Willow Tree Learning Center

Designers Chosen, Site Search On For Austin's New U.S. Courthouse

AUSTIN The General Services Administration (GSA) has chosen a design team for Austin's new U.S. Courthouse although the search for a site near downtown continues. In late November, GSA officials narrowed the list of possible locations to three sites, including a commercial tract now burdened with the skeletal remains of the abandoned Intel Corporation headquarters.

The new courthouse will be designed by Atlanta-based Mack Scogin Merrill Elam Architects in collaboration with the Austin office of Page Southerland Page. Expected to cost $45–$50 million, the new facility is being planned with 198,531 square feet. The design phase is scheduled to begin in March, once the final decision is made on a site. Construction may begin in March 2005, with occupancy possibly taking place in late 2007.

Six design teams were invited to participate in a 12-hour charette held in Austin last November, under the guidelines of the GSA's Design Excellence Program. Leonard Murphy, GSA's director of property development, said the objective was to see "how they think and how they work as a team." A similar process may take place in San Antonio later this year for a new federal courthouse there.

The two other locations under consideration are west of Congress Avenue, one being only four blocks away while the other is nine blocks away. Murphy said the Intel site, just three blocks west of Congress, would have to be cleared of its unfinished framework. "We do not want the structure," he said. "It's useless to us."

STEPHEN SHARPE

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Northeast Texas Awards Five Projects

TYLER Three architecture firms shared five prizes in the AIA Northeast Texas chapter annual design awards. A total of 16 projects were entered and reviewed by a three-person panel of architects from Austin.

Jury members Jane Stansfeld, FAIA; Emily Little, AIA; and Brian Roeder, Assoc. AIA, all of Austin, viewed the entries during the TSA convention held in late October in Austin. The jury members recognized the high quality of the entries and agreed upon the difficulty in narrowing the field to only five projects.

Awards were presented to the following projects:

• Chandler Elementary School in Victoria by Thacker Architects, Inc. – Design Award of Excellence. Designed for the Victoria Independent School District, this 72,681-square-foot facility serves 750 students. Jurors commended the project's sense of welcome and celebration, and were very impressed with the per-foot value. All academic spaces are positioned in a centrally located two-story wing, with the building sited to maximize visibility and to give equal prominence from approaches along two streets. Secure play areas provide younger children with fenced, highly visible playgrounds located away from normal traffic patterns. All teaching, administrative, library, and support spaces are integrated for Internet access and multi-media presentations.

• Education Support Center in Longview by Thacker Architects, Inc. – Design Award of Merit. Designed for the Longview Independent School District, the building was sited to de-emphasize any direct relation to sprawling adjacent facilities. Natural light is introduced into work areas by windows and clerestory lighting. Materials were selected based on low maintenance and durability, and the use of glass presents an openness to the community. The design provides ease of public access while maintaining proper security. Jurors liked the project's shapes and angles, and thought the architect's original ideas melded favorably with details borrowed from older buildings.

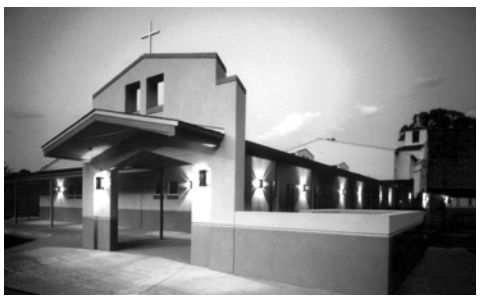
• First Lutheran Church in Longview by Duane Meyers AIA Architect – Design Merit of Honor. The church successfully responds to the client's programming criteria: extending a welcoming gesture to everyone who passes by; site development that allows worshipers opportunities to prepare for entering the sanctuary; a form of the worship space that is visually traditional, but functions without pretense or hierarchy; a plan that accommodates church doctrine; and grounds that are integrated into the worship experience. Project development was completed in phases, with each phase required to stand on its own merit. Jurors were pleased with the conciseness of the details and agreed that the progression into the building followed the program's requirements, specifically by giving the congregation an opportunity to still their hearts before worship and by the project's thoughtful siting. Jurors also complimented the use of a thin cross, which they said lends a sense of elegance to the bell tower.

• Glass Recreation in Tyler by Fitzpatrick Butler – Design Merit of Honor. This multi-function recreational facility for the City of Tyler is part of a master plan for a municipal park that will include nature trails, ponds, and an amphitheater. The exterior form is a direct reflection of the internal organization and the facility's uses, with elements that responds to the community's request for a facility which reflects its progressive goals. The jury complimented the architect on the use of consistent color, calling it delightful. Jurors described the exterior forms as playful.

• Office for Fitzpatrick Butler in Tyler by Fitzpatrick Butler – Design Merit of Honor (Interior). The structure served as a pharmacy from 1955 to 1998, and its rebirth as the home of an architecture firm began in 2000. The greatest changes occurred inside, with the discovery of cast-in-place concrete walls underneath the interior finish. That dominant element set the example for other materials chosen for the interior. The remodel design took advantage of the structural ability to span wide areas, and the resulting openness, with the addition of three pyramid skylights in the studio area, allowed light to permeate the entire office. Jurors commented favorably on the salvaging of the concrete walls and said the trusses and bare light bulbs brought to mind the building's original era and purpose.

Chandler Elementary School

Education Support Center



First Lutheran Church

Glass Recreation

Office for Fitzpatrick Butler

Four Projects Win AIA LRGV Awards

MCALLEN The Lower Rio Grande Valley chapter of the AIA recently presented design awards to four projects, including three by Kell Muñoz Architects, in its annual design competition.

Jury members were Herman Dyal, principal of the graphic design firm FD2S; David Richter, FAIA, principal of Richter Architects; and Wendy Dunnam, Assoc. AIA, of Page Southerland Page.

The winning projects were:

• South Texas Community College's Starr County Campus by Kell Muñoz Architects. Jury comments included "fabulous use of color" and "regional vernacular in abstract contemporary terms."

• La Joya ISD Performing Arts Center by Kell Muñoz Architects. Jury comments included "straight-forward, nicely done," "South Texas equivalent of Arquitectonica but very modern," and "crazy in a wonderful way."

• University of Texas at Brownsville by Kell Muñoz Architects. Jury comments included "wonderful attention to detail," "will age gracefully," and "I would love to be a student there."

• Texas Department of Transportation's Travel Information Center in Laredo by Ashley Humphries & Sanchez. Jury comments included "most disciplined application of classic details," "self-assured," and "wide-open spaces sort of place."

Of Note: New Date for Nasher

DALLAS The Nasher Sculpture Center is scheduled to open to the public October 19 in the downtown Arts District, several months later than previously announced. The $60 million center, designed by Renzo Piano in collaboration with landscape architect Peter Walker, will be home to one of the world's finest private collections of modern sculpture, the Raymond and Patsy Nasher Collection. Dallas developer and philanthropist Raymond Nasher is funding the entire project. Piano's 54,000-square-foot building is sited on 2.4 acres adjacent to the Dallas Museum of Art. During the next few months, a cast aluminum sunscreen fabricated in Italy will be placed on top of glass panels that make up the innovative roof designed by Piano. The completed roof system will create a sunshading device which gathers and diffuses natural light into the sculpture galleries. The planting of trees on the site began early last year and will continue in the coming months. The long-awaited Nasher Sculpture Center is expected to revive the Arts District, and design work on three other high-profile projects planned for the district is now underway.

South Texas Community College's Starr County Campus

La Joya ISD Performing Arts Cetner

University of Texas at Brownsville

TXDoT Travel Information Center

Preservation Texas Call for Entries

Preservation Texas is accepting nominations for its seventeenth annual Preservation Texas Honor Awards. Entries will be judged by an independent jury of professionals representing a cross-section of disciplines within the field of historic preservation. Visit *www.preservationtexas.org* for more information. Entries due JANUARY 10

Hadid Projects on Exhibit

This exhibition at the Price Tower Arts Center in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, provides an in-depth look at recently completed projects and works in progress by the Iraqi-born, London-based architect Zaha Hadid. These include her site analysis and master plan concept for a new museum in Bartlesville. *Building Motion: The Architecture of Zaha Hadid*, organized by the Yale University School of Architecture Gallery, will also feature drawings, paintings, models, and computer animations. Opens JANUARY 16

RDA Presents *Swiss Made*

The Rice Design Alliance begins its 2003 Spring Lecture Series with presentations by five Swiss architects whose careers span from the 1950s to the present. By highlighting their works, RDA will contribute to the general knowledge and appreciation of Switzerland's cultural resources and establish a basis for understanding the potency of regionally inflected modernism. The lectures take place each Wednesday JANUARY 22 – FEBRUARY 12

Historic Modern Icons at University of Houston

Historic Modern Icons: An Exploration of Issues in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Architecture comprises a series of lectures and panel discussions set on two consecutive Tuesdays in February at the University of Houston's Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture. Presenters will include William F. Stern, FAIA, of the UH faculty; David Leatherbarrow, Ph.D., professor of urban design at the University of Pennsylvania; and Matthias Boeckl, editor-in-chief of *architektur aktuell*, the Austrian architecture journal. A third installment is scheduled March 25. FEBRUARY 18 – 25

Health Care Projects Discussed in Houston

The Art of Architecture in Health Care Design: The Humanization of Institutional Spaces, a lecture sponsored by AIA Houston and the Houston Architecture Foundation, to share information related to Houston's Texas Medical Center. The lecture is scheduled from 5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the TMC's Denton A. Cooley Building, 6770 Bertner Avenue. FEBRUARY 19

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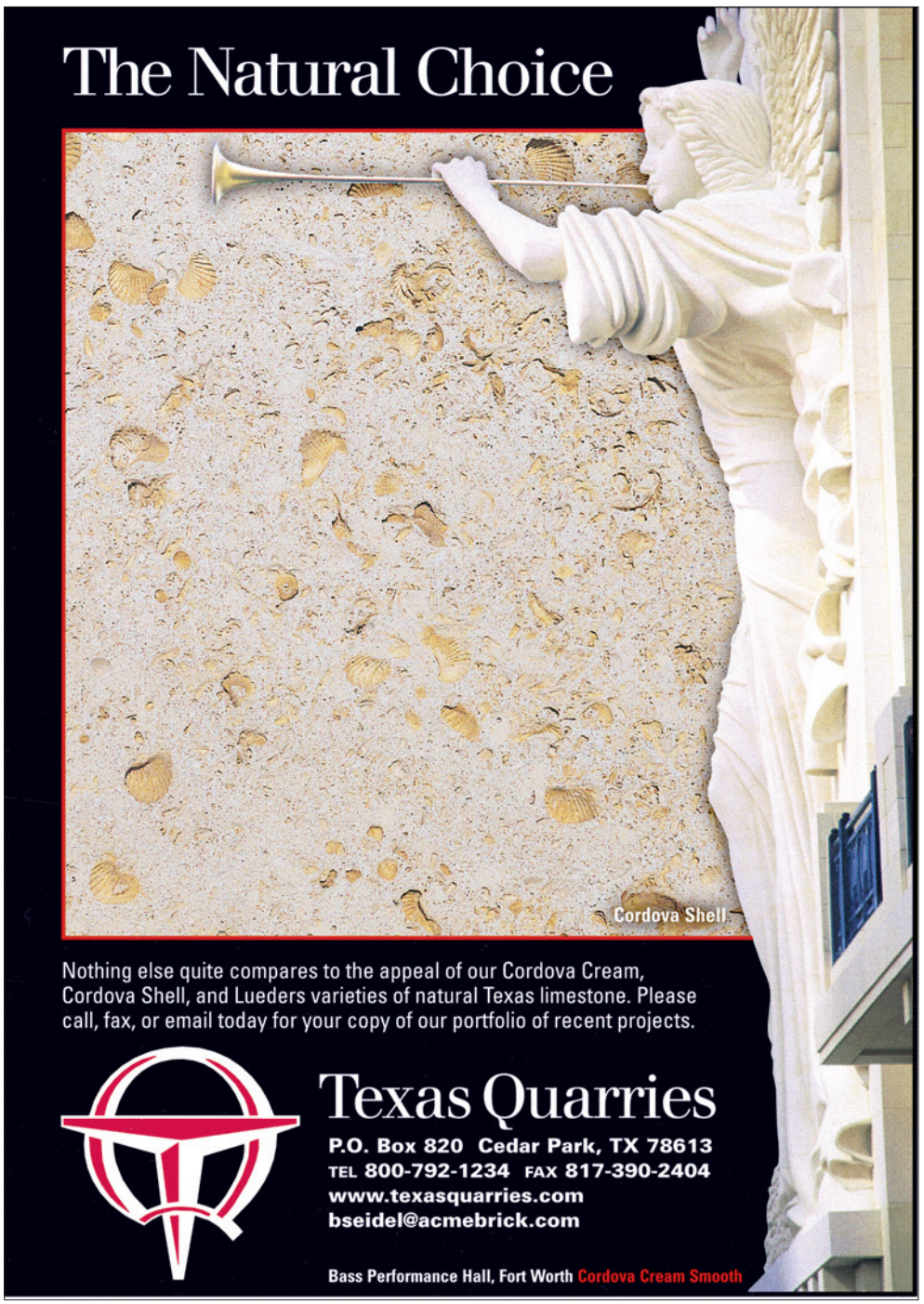

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Showtime! A star performer returns ...

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– Lloyd Huffman, Building Committee Chairman, Palace Renovation Board

Metal-clad wood Marvin windows and stained wood doors and transoms brought an aging performer back to the stage and screen and restored a little wonder to life in Corsicana.

photographer Ray Don Tilley, Bastrop, Texas

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Neglected Legacy

Among hundreds built in Texas for African-Americans, forgotten school in Brazoria County awaits resuce.

The Columbia Rosenwald Colored School opened in 1922. Abandoned in the 1950s and later moved to another site, the building remains recognizable but is rapidly decaying; top photo courtesy Columbia Historical Association; bottom photo by Ben Koush.

ON THE RURAL OUTSKIRTS OF WEST COLUMBIA, along State Highway 35 about 50 miles southwest of Houston, a decrepit frame building overgrown with wisteria and surrounded by languorous cows appears hardly worth a second glance. It is difficult to imagine that this abandoned structure was once the principal educational facility for all African-Americans in Brazoria County.

The Columbia Rosenwald Colored School, erected in 1922, is one of perhaps only 40 schools remaining of the 527 built in Texas under the aegis of Julius Rosenwald, a Chicago millionaire who ran Sears Roebuck. Profoundly affected by the impoverished conditions endured by African-Americans in the South forced to live under the era's "Jim Crow" laws, the business magnate established the Julius Rosenwald Fund in 1913 to help finance the construction of new schools to improve educational opportunities for the region's downtrodden black population. Instrumental in aiding Rosenwald to accomplish his philanthropic objective was Booker T. Washington, the prominent African-American activist who believed blacks could demand social equality with whites only after achieving economic parity through adequate education.

Not wishing the fund's outlays to be mere handouts, Rosenwald set strict conditions for disbursements which also encouraged cooperation between blacks and whites. First, the local community had to provide a publicly owned site of at least two acres and to pledge continued maintenance. In addition, African-Americans desiring a school had to contribute either cash or labor. (The Columbia school cost $1,900 to build. Of the total, $1,225 came from local taxes, $175 from African-American residents, and $500 from the foundation.) And finally, the building had to conform to one of the sophisticated architectural designs devised by professors at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. Despite such rigorous stipulations, the need was great and the response tremendous. Between 1913 and 1932, the Rosenwald Fund helped finance construction of 5,357 schools across the South. Enrollment peaked in the early 1930s at around 650,000 students, or nearly one-third of all African-American children living in the 15 southern states.

Derelict but still distinguishable, the one-story lap-sided Columbia Rosenwald Colored School continues to stand on five-foot piers above the Brazos River flood plain. (All Rosenwald schools were designed with a single story to save on construction cost and for quick escape in case of fire.) Originally, a row of large single-hung windows ran along the long east-facing side to provide light while a row of small "breeze windows" was set high in the west wall to increase air flow and minimize heat gain from the afternoon sun. The two-room plan allowed a classroom in front and a workshop or community room to the rear, with chalkboards built into the central partition that could be raised to allow communication between the rooms. The ceiling and interior walls were covered with tongue-and-groove pine boards. The original color scheme called for an exterior of white walls with gray trim and an interior with a white ceiling, light gray or cream walls, and dark brown wainscot. The Rosenwald Fund publications were specific about these colors, insisting to a skeptical rural audience that they would "materially increase the amount of light in the classroom…add beauty to the interior and will be more pleasing and restful to the eyes…better the sanitary conditions" and "increase the durability of the building."

The advent of school buses in the late 1940s eliminated the need for decentralized schools and, as a result, the Columbia Rosenwald Colored School and its smaller sister schools in Brazoria County were closed in favor of a single large facility. In the early 1950s the school was sold at a tax auction to James Phillips Sr. who moved the building from its original location on the banks of the Brazos River to his adjacent property about a quarter mile to the southwest for use as storage shed. When his son, James "Scooter" Phillips inherited the building a few years ago, it was all but abandoned to decay; its history almost completely forgotten.

Recently, members of the Columbia Historical Association rediscovered the the origins and historical significance of the former school building and secured its donation. The group now plans to move the building to a new site behind the downtown West Columbia Historical Museum for restoration and reuse as an African-American interpretive center. That is good news for this historic building. However, as other Rosenwald schools languish inconspicuously and slowly deteriorate, much work remains to be done to save Julius Rosenwald's legacy from being lost forever.

BEN KOUSH

Ben Koush works for Val Glitsch FAIA Architects in Houston.

TexasArchitect

January/February 2003

EDUCATION

In this issue *Texas Architect* features a broad spectrum of educational facilities being designed and built across the state: Pre-K Centers in Houston by Kirksey Architecture, a courtyard-plan prototype for a prekindergarten configured to fit four different sites; The Fred Parks Law Library in Houston by Gensler, an addition to a downtown campus with a transparent facade that radically departs from the college's brick-and-mortar image; Good Shepherd Episcopal School in Dallas by Good Fulton & Farrell Architects, a series of several recent campus projects that culminate in a defined quadrangle organization; Americo Paredes Middle School in Austin by Fromberg Associates and Delgado Design Group, several component buildings strung together like a necklace by a gracefully arcing canopy. In addition, James A. Brady, AIA, in "Learning Places for Success," gives an overview of contemporary design innovations that support today's educational objectives while also addressing the individualized learning needs of all students.

PLUS

Stargazing Across Space and Time

The University of Texas McDonald Observatory Visitors Center outside of Fort Davis is based on ancient Puebloan observatories and responds to mankind's universal fascination with the heavens.

by ED SOLTERO, AIA

Unique to the prototype's Wildcat Way configuration is the curved canopy at the entry.

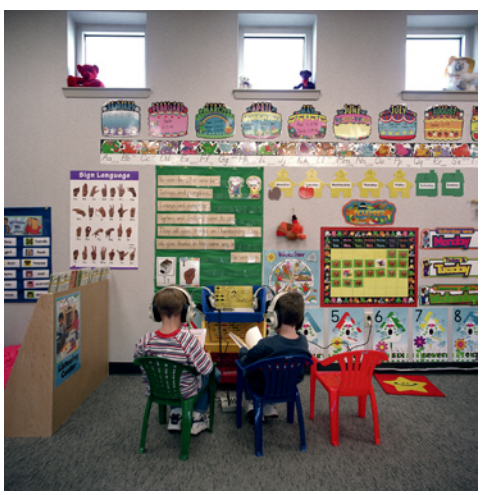
A pre-k prototype configured on four very different sites to provide all kids with an equal drive toward discovery.

Here *for the* Children

by PATRICK PETERS

PROJECT Spring Branch ISD Pre-K Centers, Houston
CLIENT Spring Branch Independent School District
ARCHITECT Kirksey Architecture
CONTRACTOR Williams Development and Construction
CONSULTANTS Haynes Whaley Associates (structural); Klotz Associates (civil); DBR Engineering Consultants (MEP); Kudella & Weinheimer (landscape); Frank Clements & Associates (food service)
PHOTOGRAPHER Aker/Zvonkovic Photography

(below) Classroom interiors are designed for flexibility to allow for personalized décor. (right) The 18,000-square-foot courtyards are equipped for outdoor activities.



SPRING BRANCH INDEPENDENT SCHOOL District is the first in Texas to offer free full-day prekindergarten instruction to every four-year-old in the district regardless of English language proficiency or family income. High demand for the program initially led to overcrowded facilities awkwardly housed within existing elementary schools, a situation the school district's administrators sought to improve with the construction of four new prekindergarten schools. Known as Schools for Early Learning, the facilities were designed by Kirksey Architecture and are based on the Houston firm's own prototype.

The district-wide educational program was conceived by Hal Guthrie, Spring Branch ISD's former general superintendent, and Anita Snell, the school district's director of early childhood, who collaborated on a search for a mechanism to upgrade and expand SBISD's full-day prekindergarten education. A successful bond election in 1999 initiated a quickly implemented building program. Working within the constraints of a limited budget and a compressed 10-month schedule to complete design and construction of the first three schools, the architects conceived of the schools as four individualized versions of the same courtyard-plan prototype. Kirksey's prototype proved a useful vehicle to provide parity among the individual campuses—Bear Boulevard, Lion Lane, Tiger Trail, and Wildcat Way.

SBISD officials approved a courtyard plan because of its inherently inward-focused character, and they embraced Kirksey's prototype because it responded well to the school district's seemingly contradictory goals of creating a secure environment while also promoting the kindergartners' development as life-long learners through exploration and discovery. However, due to conditions not being uniform at the four different sites, Kirksey's configurations of the prototype achieve varying degrees of success at reconciling the client's dual objectives.

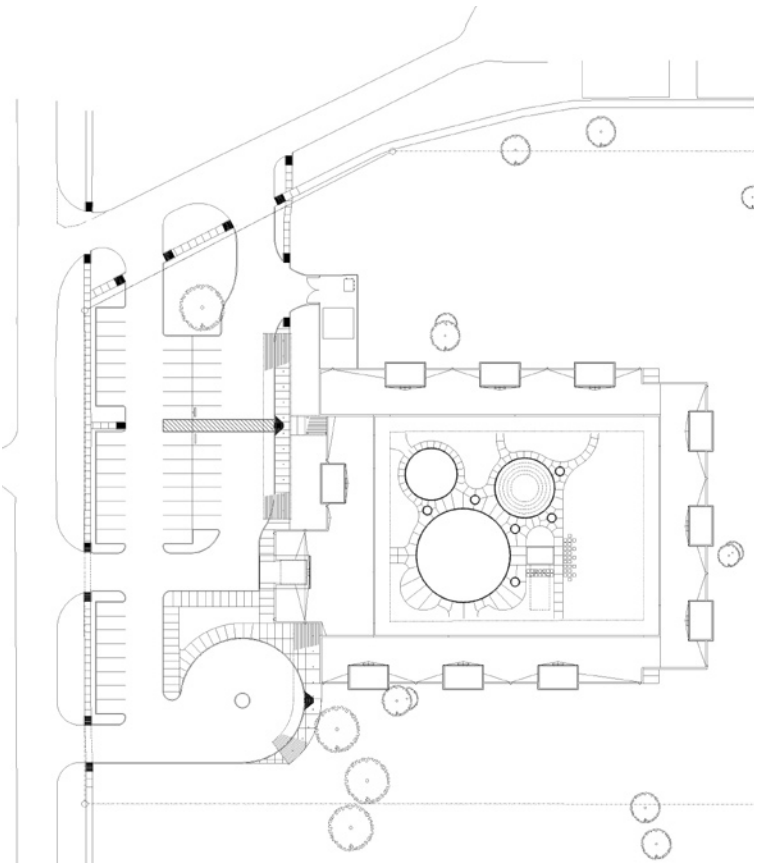
Senior Vice President Wes Good, AIA, led Kirksey's education team in the development of a

The courtyard prototype proved a useful vehicle to provide parity among 4 individual campuses.

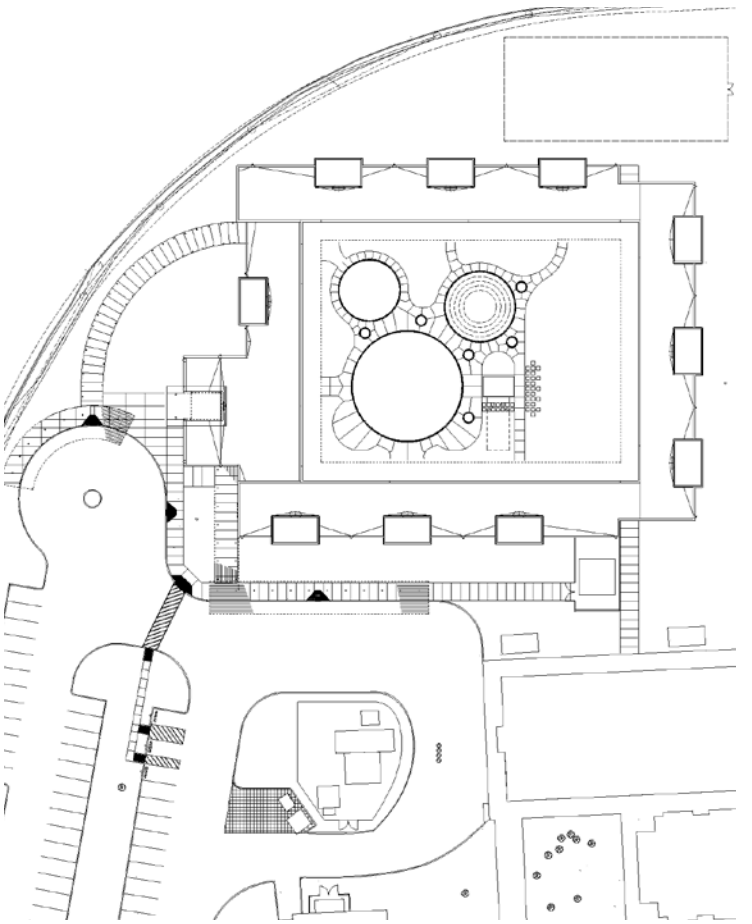
prototype plan that could be repeated four times to produce identical spatial offerings. Within each school, 18 classrooms (each comprising 800 square feet), along with two infant/toddler child-care rooms, are paired into symmetrical two-room pods and distributed around an 18,000-square-foot planted courtyard of shared play/activity areas. Internally, the two rooms in each pod are linked by an open passage at their midpoint, which allows overlapping supervision between the two pairs of teaching staff required for each classroom pod. The passage also yields greater economy by providing the two classes a shared restroom as well as a computer workstation for teachers. The most striking spatial feature of the classrooms is the larger volume art and science alcove which is illuminated by a clerestory window set in each pod's perimeter wall. The surfaces employed here accommodate the messy nature of these activities while separating these functions from the other, quieter areas distributed elsewhere in the classroom. While the remaining smaller clerestory windows punctuating the perimeter wall highlight the emphasis on building- and child-security, the low sill of the generous courtyard-facing windows link the various rooms to the school as a whole via the courtyard, thus supporting the sense of a shared community.

(above, left) The courtyards provide a secure environment for children that is easily monitored by teachers. (above, right) The Tiger Trail School is nestled within a stand of existing trees.

In each of the four schools, the centralized administration and service functions occupy a cluster at the courtyard's short end nearest the parking lot and bus dropoff. Marked by a colored-plaster and high-roofed mass, the administration cluster includes an articulated entry lobby, the director's office, an infirmary staffed by a registered nurse, a small conference room, an employee lounge, the pair of child-care classrooms for infants and toddlers of district employees, and a commercial kitchen for serving breakfasts and lunches to all students. All spaces are linked within the courtyard by a 12-foot-wide covered walkway, which can double as an outdoor classroom for spillover and messy activities, especially when interior spaces fill to their 22-child maximum capacity.



TIGER TRAIL



WILDCAT WAY

Unadorned walls typical of courtyard buildings often project a sense of detachment from their surroundings, and that perception is typically heightened with a freestanding structure. Such is the case with the first two schools to be completed, Bear Boulevard and Lion Lane, the sites of which offered little in the way of existing adjacent buildings or foliage or topographic variation due to their previous use as open athletic fields. Consequently, because of their physical isolation on otherwise barren sites, these two structures appear more autonomous than the other two schools. In contrast, Tiger Trail, the program's third school, is carefully nestled among several existing trees on a site between the Spring Branch Natatorium and Westwood Elementary School. These elements soften the contrast between the surrounding environment and the new prekindergarten center, while also offering classroom views of dappled light on foliage framed by clerestory windows.

The Wildcat Way School – the last of the four to be built and the only one constructed outside of the original three-school bundled contract – reveals the most eccentricities through the architects' tweaking of the prototype plan to fit the conditions of its site. The approach leads through several layers of tall pine trees before one encounters the school, which due to the constricted configuration of available land is positioned with its entry axis nearly perpendicular to the direction of approach. At Wildcat Way, other adjustments to the prototype contribute to an unfolding spatial sequence as evidenced, for example, in the form of aluminum canopies for sheltering children entering and exiting school buses and carpool automobiles. The canopies used in all four schools are, in this case, configured to shape a circular auto court and to frame a triangular lawn between the building and the covered path to the child-care entrance. Both of these modifications to the repeated school plan have created an improvised character not found at the three schools built in more open settings.

According to Wes Good, the Kirksey team does not usually pursue commissions that require repetition of the same building plan. But the repeated-prototype solution sprang from the school district's desire to build four equally organized facilities, all within a very tight completion schedule and a limited construction budget. The first consequence of this approach – as demonstrated by the individualized designs for the four schools – is that, while successful internally, the repeated plans are often less successful in contributing to the larger campus domain. The second consequence is that, given the inherent benefit whereby prototyping allows a designer to refine a scheme through serial iterations, an advantage is lost with simultaneous production, as was required by SBISD for the first three schools. Alternatively, by implementing school design and construction in series, each iteration of a prototype-based project could provide feedback for generational refinement to its successor. The subtle but successful modifications evident at Wildcat Way illustrate this point.

The third consequence of repeated plans is an expectation that all the schools will be outfitted with exactly the same amenities, yet individual circumstances (especially existing site conditions) make this difficult to fulfill. One example is that budgetary constraints precluded landscaping at the first three

"Here for the Children" continued on page 42

An unassuming urban college campus lightens up with a new library that invites everyone to watch.

legal TRANSPARENCY

by MARK OBERHOLZER, AIA

(opposite page, top) With its walls of glass, the new library addition opens itself up to downtown Houston. (opposite page, bottom) Evening time accentuates the sense of openness. (this page, left) A monumental stair marks the entry to the library. (this page, below) Structural bracing is exposed within the light-filled floors.

PROJECT Fred Parks Law Library at the South Texas College of Law, Houston
CLIENT South Texas College of Law
ARCHITECT Gensler
CONTRACTOR Vaughn Construction
CONSULTANTS Hines (development manager); Haynes Whaley Associates (structural); Land Tech Consultants (civil); Wylie & Associates (MEP); Office of James Burnett (landscape)
PHOTOGRAPHER Aker/Zvonkovic Photography

RESOURCES **CONCRETE MATERIALS:** Hanson; **UNIT PAVERS:** Acme; **SITE, STREET, AND MALL FURNISHINGS:** Gardenside; **MASONRY UNITS:** Arriscraft; **LIMESTONE:** Walker Zanger; **GRANITE:** Walker Zanger; **CAST STONE:** Precision Stone; **RAILINGS AND HANDRAILS:** Berger Iron Works; **ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK:** Quality Woodworks Interiors; **METAL ROOFING:** Berridge; **GLASS:** Viracon; **TILE:** American Olean; **ACOUSTICAL CEILINGS:** Armstrong; **WALL COVERINGS:** Carnegie; **ACOUSTICAL WALL TREATMENTS:** Decoustics; **PAINTS:** Sherwin-Williams

THE NEW FRED PARKS LAW LIBRARY ADDITION has given the South Texas College of Law a striking new urban presence to an institution that has been part of downtown Houston for 72 years.

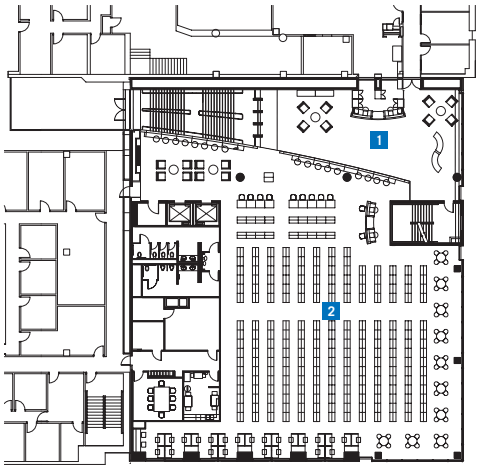
The existing college buildings – crisp brick volumes with small slit-like windows – present an unassuming presence to the city. Gensler's Shon Link conceived the new library wing as an open, glazed volume in sharp contrast to the existing building. The new wing creates a light-filled interior during the day and a dramatic beacon at night.

Although the new library faces Caroline Street to the east, the library is entered through the existing San Jacinto Street entrance on the west side via a pleasantly busy street-level lobby. At the end of the existing circulation spine, a monumental stair announces the entry to the library proper.

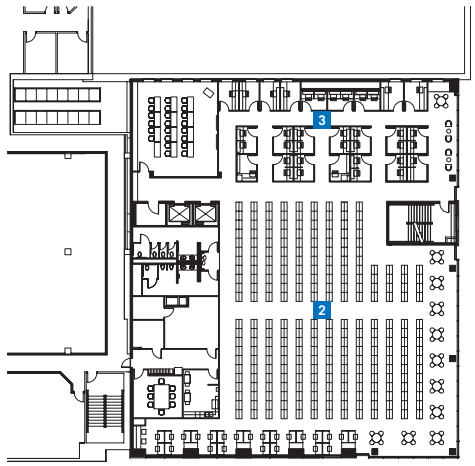
The entry stairs are in fact part of the library lobby, establishing the relatively narrow width of this light-filled two-story volume. The east wall is entirely glass, providing a panoramic view of what will soon be the city's new basketball arena. In contrast to the college's functional, low-key street-level entrance lobby, the library's lobby is bright and pristine with limestone flooring and white laminate walls.

The second- and third-floor stack areas are open to the lobby space. A narrow bridge with a glass handrail crosses through the lobby to connect to the existing building, slanting downward to reconcile the different floor levels between old and new buildings. The fourth and fifth floors of the library contain stacks towards the middle of the floors and study areas set along the glazed perimeter. Recogniz-

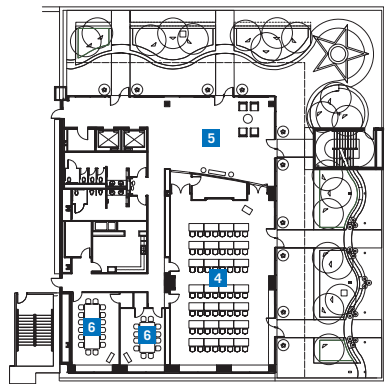
The transparency of the library facade is especially evident at night.



SECOND FLOOR LOBBY



TYPICAL FLOOR



SIXTH FLOOR TERRACE

FLOOR PLAN
1 CIRCULATION DESK
2 STACKS
3 STUDY ROOMS
4 CONFERENCE CENTER
5 PRE-FUNCTION
6 MEETING ROOM

The client wanted a new public image. The architect responded with a light-filled library addition that becomes a beacon at night.

The roof-top terrace replaced an existing street-level plaza.

ing the many different ways in which law students study and collaborate, the college provided traditional carrels, casual furniture groups and a variety of different sized study rooms, all wired for access to the Internet.

The building's top level is not a full interior floor. There is a large roof-top terrace in addition to the conference center located under the curved penthouse roof. Because the library addition replaced a street-level plaza, the roof-top terrace functions as the college's relocated outdoor space. Covered outdoor space is found under the cantilever of the curved roof above to the north, while the east side of the terrace is shaded by a pergola. Planted with river birch and native grasses, the space offers a quiet refuge, albeit a very urban one offering dramatic views of the surrounding city.

One of the college's main requirements for the new addition was to establish a new image for the school. Although the existing building occupies three-quarters of a city block, it clearly acts as a foil to the smaller addition. This is particularly evident in the evening when the interior of the building – its book stacks, its studious clientele, and even its structural bracing – is revealed to the city. Says Kim Parker, a vice president of the college: "This has made everyone see us in a different way."

Mark Oberholzer, AIA, teaches at Rice University School of Architecture and practices with the Wittenberg Partnership in Houston.

COMPLETING *the* QUAD

New projects bring a sense of place and order to a school's evolving campus in North Dallas.

by MARIAN MILLICAN

and REBECCA BOLES, AIA

PROJECT Good Shepherd Episcopal School, Dallas
CLIENT Good Shepherd Episcopal School
ARCHITECT Good Fulton & Farrell Architects
CONTRACTOR Andres Construction Services
CONSULTANTS L.A. Fuess Partners (structural); Lower School: Tomden Engineering (civil); BL&P Engineers (MEP); Middle School: Gonzalez & Schneeberg (civil); Purdy McGuire (MEP); Bruce Berger (landscape); H.G. Rice & Co. (food service)
PHOTOGRAPHER Charles Davis Smith, AIA

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE GOOD Shepherd shares its 10-acre site with Good Shepherd Episcopal School at the busy intersection of Northaven and Midway roads in Dallas. The school, founded in 1959, keeps a respectful distance from both streets, alongside a small chapel designed by Tom Dean in 1958 and a sanctuary designed by George Dahl in 1968.

Supported by a long amicable working relationship with the school, Good Fulton & Farrell Architects in Dallas has re-focused the campus by creating a traditional quadrangle through an incremental series of demolitions, new buildings, and renovations. Over the past six years, the firm has completed three projects on Good Shepherd's existing campus: the 17,000-square-foot Middle School for grades five through eight; a 26,000-square-foot Lower School for kindergarten through fourth grade; and a 5,000-square-foot Pavilion that includes a multipurpose cafeteria and a performance space. Both the Pavilion and the Lower School were additions to the renovated Stanard Hall.

There is a *laissez faire* sense about the campus planning at Good Shepherd. Circulation linkages to important campus entry points take precedence over axial formalism, but all the new and renovated buildings ultimately connect to define one central courtyard. (With the future addition of a canopy between the Lower and Middle School, a continuous path of covered circulation will link virtually all of the buildings.) All major circulation paths surrounding the courtyard have been given an architectural expression. Along its southern boundary, canopies have been extended from the existing Trinity Hall to cover exterior walkways leading to the entry of the new Middle School. The courtyard's eastern edge is defined by the Lower School's roofed, two-story arcade (and, in the future, the canopy). Along the northern edge of the courtyard, a fully glazed interior connector links the Lower School to Stanard Hall.

Circulation was also highlighted at the Pavilion, where a curved arcade creates a covered drop-off for students and serves as an entry point for visitors arriving from the north.

The new facades were constructed from honest materials that complement the white stone and red brick palette of the site's original houses of worship. The Middle School was planned on a four-foot module and was constructed from concrete tilt-wall panels, concrete masonry block, and brick. The facade of the Lower School used the same four-foot module to locate an orthogonal grid of punched windows, while a rotated grid of cream and ivory cement plaster panels were overlaid to create a visual sense of playfulness. Throughout the buildings, structural steel members were left exposed—a subtle lesson in architecture that shows students how their school was constructed. Other constants in the design of the Lower School, the Middle School, and the Pavilion are metal roofs and clerestory windows.

The four-foot module is also evident within all the school's interiors. The Middle School's entry is defined by an eight-foot rotated square of brightly color vinyl tile, a motif that is repeated throughout the two-level building at the entry to each classroom. The spacious connector corridors have vinyl tiled flooring, vinyl wallcovering as a neutral background for displays of exceptional student art, recessed double-tiered lockers set under clerestory windows, and a semi-open, louvered ceiling plane which partly exposes the HVAC systems. Corridors terminate with stunning, large-scale student art, which not only adds color and texture, but also visually shortens the corridor itself.

Stairwells are open and airy, each culminating in a skylight and each with a unique variation of wood and metal railing system. It was a bit disconcerting that color was not introduced; not only for visual interest, but also as a method of way finding.

Classrooms facing the street side of the building are "standard" fare, with lay-in ceiling and fluorescent lighting. Each has a "teaching wall"—a series of sliding panels comprised of writing boards and tackable surfaces over floor-to-ceiling storage. The science classroom offers an outdoor learning center, yet to be developed, but with great potential as a balcony garden or nature center.

Relatively more exciting are the classrooms along the courtyard wall. They have vaulted, open ceilings and full-height windows, a combination that gives students a strong sense of a "treehouse" setting. It was disappointing to note that all windows are

Students are constantly reminded of how their school buildings are put together.

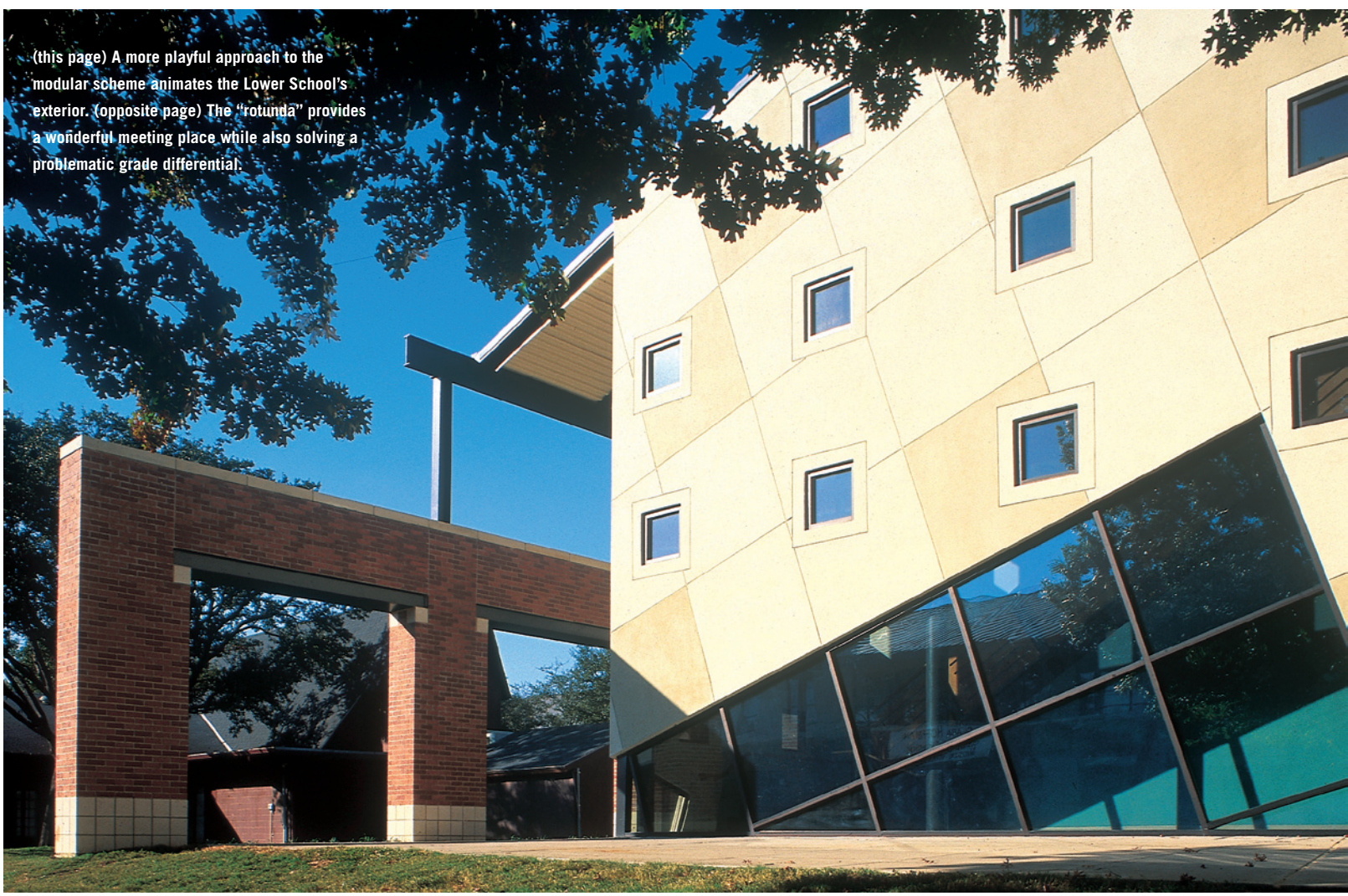
Exposed structural elements teach subtle lessons to students.

fixed—allowing the view of the treetops, but negating the gentle breeze of such a setting.

In the Lower School, the design is much more playful. Here, the four-foot module is now rotated, creating a visual rhythm not only on the facade, but also within the entry fenestration. The playfulness of the entry, however, is not carried into the corridors and classrooms. Even the interior's colors (green, purple, and yellow) are confined to the three separate entries and are not carried through the connecting corridors. Unlike the Middle School where continuous clerestory windows are set above the lockers, here they are replaced with two-by-two punched window openings which are meant to be "showcases," but are neglected in most of the classrooms. Also, by limiting the interior glazing in the light monitor above, the corridors are darker than desired for showcasing the wonderful student artwork.

The "rotunda" – the connection between the new Lower School and Stanard Hall – solves a problematic grade differential and eliminates the need for an extra elevator. By introducing a slowly rising ramp around a double-volume center point (with seating on the inside and circulation on the outside), the architect has designed a wonderful meeting place. In early December a huge Christmas tree made the rotunda especially attractive, and the transparency of the rotunda's glazed walls also allowed appreciation of the tree from the exterior courtyard and covered walkways.

The culmination of the complex and its most elaborate facade is at the Pavilion's northern entry. This volumetric multipurpose space serves as cafeteria and auditorium. But this is not a standard school auditorium—this is a performance theater with refined acoustics, state-of-the art stage lighting and sound system; a required extra stair turned into an integrated architectural "balcony" for Romeo's Juliet; and ample room to comfortably seat about 380 theatergoers. The fully glazed north wall and south-facing clerestory can be covered within minutes by electronic blackout shades.



(this page) A more playful approach to the modular scheme animates the Lower School's exterior. (opposite page) The "rotunda" provides a wonderful meeting place while also solving a problematic grade differential.

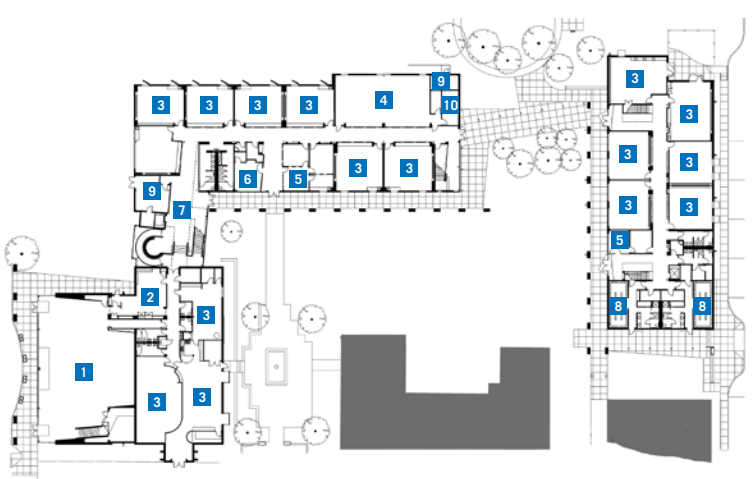
For everyday use as the cafeteria, the Pavilion enjoys the natural northern light. The room easily accommodates the entire student body and encourages interaction between the grades. Although designed as a neutral space, one can imagine the color and liveliness that transforms the space at lunchtime. The kitchen, equipped with the finest commercial appliances, is closed from the hallway by a beautifully detailed wooden "garage" door that opens when meals are served.

Designing schools is a complex process, and creating an environment that supports a school's activities and objectives is essential. At Good Shepherd, the school's directors have formulated an excellent curriculum while the school's favored architect has succeeded in defining a sense of place wherein the newer facilities relate to the older ones. Despite a few minor missed opportunities, the newly enhanced campus favorably supports the educational goals of the school.

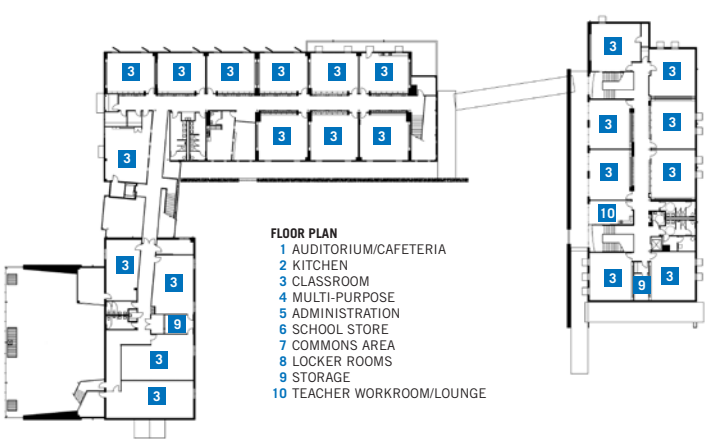
Marian Millican is an associate professor and director of interior design at the University of Texas at Arlington.

Rebecca Boles, AIA, practices architecture in Fort Worth.

RESOURCES **CONCRETE MATERIALS:** TXI; **MASONRY UNITS:** Acme Brick (brick), Featherlite (TXI, CMUs); **STEEL JOISTS:** Vulcraft; **METAL DECKING:** Vulcraft; **RAILINGS AND HANDRAILS:** H&H Steel, Medco Construction; **EXPANSION JOINTS:** Balco Metalines; **ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK:** Medco; **LAMINATES:** Nevamar; **WATERPROOFING AND DAMPPROOFING:** Dow Corning; **EXTERIOR INSULATION AND FINISH SYSTEMS:** TEIFS; **METAL ROOFING:** Berridge; **ROOF HATCH AND ACCESSORIES:** Bilco; **WOOD AND PLASTIC DOORS AND FRAMES:** Buell Wood Doors; **ENTRANCES AND STOREFRONTS:** Kawneer, U.S. Aluminum; **VERTICAL GLAZING:** CPI International; **TILE:** Daltile; **GROUT:** Lati-crete; **ACOUSTICAL CEILINGS:** Armstrong; **SPECIAL CEILING SURFACES:** Medco wood slat ceilings; **VCT:** Mannington; **RESILIENT FLOORING:** Nora, Roppe; **WALL COVERINGS:** Koroseal; **PAINTS:** Sherwin-Williams; **STUCCO:** Lone Star; **HIGH PERFORMANCE COATINGS:** Dow Corning; **SIGNAGE AND GRAPHICS:** Wooten Metals



FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

FLOOR PLAN
1 AUDITORIUM/CAFETERIA
2 KITCHEN
3 CLASSROOM
4 MULTI-PURPOSE
5 ADMINISTRATION
6 SCHOOL STORE
7 COMMONS AREA
8 LOCKER ROOMS
9 STORAGE
10 TEACHER WORKROOM/LOUNGE

Sunshades and the courtyard canopy articulate the school's main entry.

Like its late folklorist namesake, Paredes Middle School translates programmatic function into a site-specific campus

Skillful INTERPRETATION

by MICHAEL SHEARIN GUARINO

PROJECT Americo Paredes Middle School, Austin
CLIENT Austin Independent School District
ARCHITECT Fromberg/Delgado Architects JV
ASSOCIATED ARCHITECTS Overland Partners and Stanley Architects
CONTRACTOR C.F. Jordan Commercial
CONSULTANTS LOC Consultants (structural); Carter & Burgess (civil); Kent Consulting Engineers (MEP); Eleanor H. McKinney (landscape); Millunzi & Associates (food service)
PHOTOGRAPHER AtelierWong Photography

AMERICO PAREDES (1915-1999) IS REMEMBERED as one of the first and most effective interpreters of our region's distinctive "border" culture. Through his decades of work at the University of Texas, Paredes introduced to a wider non-Hispanic audience the long-overlooked folk tales, legends, songs, poetry, and other traditional Norteño literary forms.

Perhaps fittingly, the recently completed middle school in Austin which bears his name stands as further testament to the challenges of translation and interpretation which bedevil designers of public works such as schools.

In 1998 the citizens of Austin passed an eyebrow-lifting $369 million bond program to play an accelerated game of catch-up with the Capital City's high-tech boom. Dozens of new schools and renovations – ranging from prekindergarten through high school – were undertaken almost simultaneously between early 1999 and late 2001. The Austin Independent School District (AISD) retained BLGY/Sverdrup as program manager to direct selection of design teams and manage construction after the projects came off the boards.

AISD set the commendable goal of leveling the competitive field by encouraging joint ventures, along with the more familiar "big" and "school design" firms, to pursue the suddenly abundant work. On its face, the program met its goals, with 40 percent of the projects awarded to firms identified as historically underutilized businesses (HUB). Of those HUB firms, 63 percent were local.

The Paredes joint venture of Fromberg Associates and Delgado Design Group, both of Austin, initially assembled by the husband and wife team of Pat and Jesus Delgado, AIA, represented the complex balancing act which characterized the formation of many of these planning teams. The Paredes group eventually grew to include associated firms Stanley Architects of Austin and Overland Partners of San Antonio. Landscape architect Eleanor McKinney of Stanley Architects and Overland's Bob Shemwell, AIA, collaborated on the highly regarded Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin. Randy Fromberg, AIA, focuses his practice largely on schools, and he has many to his credit in Central Texas.

Building masses are interrupted by level changes and corridors lead to playspaces and pathways to the surrounding park.

Despite the appearance of being a "dream team," the Paredes joint venture began to experience friction with BLGY/Sverdrup almost from the outset. The team found that most of its communications with the school district were to be filtered through the program managers, and that the design was to hew to a prototype already drawn by another firm. In addition, the bond project's budget, adversely affected by the inflating construction economy of the late '90s, was too constrained to make the prototype work on a challenging site. Further complicating the task, the Paredes group was informed that land acquisition had taken longer than expected, yet the schedule for the school's design would not be adjusted.

LEARNING PLACES *for* SUCCESS

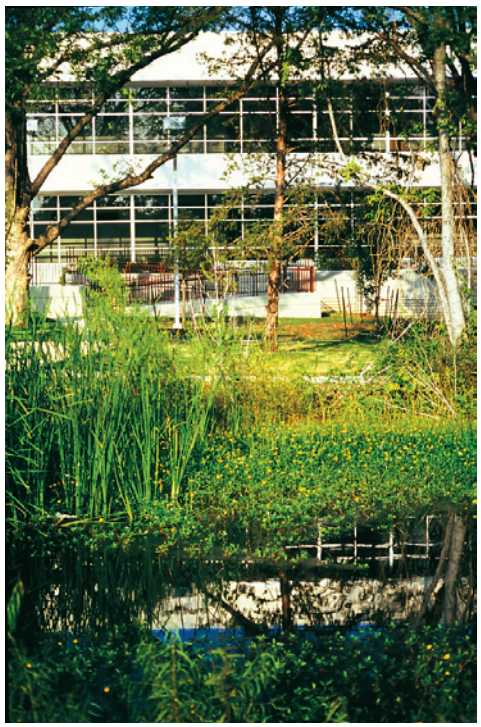
by JAMES A. BRADY, AIA

THE ARCHITECT'S DIALOGUE ON EDUCATIONAL facilities is expanding beyond the realm of building life-cycle costs to include design strategies which optimize the potential for individual student success. This broadened focus – increasingly shared by educators and architects – is redefining the term "school" to convey the idea that school facilities are no longer seen simply as a series of containers providing protection from the elements and separation from the community at large. Instead, in the enlightened view of today's educators and like-minded architects, school facilities themselves are now perceived as educational tools which provide a rich palette of instructional spaces that are safe, personal, nurturing, engaging, peaceful, flexible, and playful. These learning places, in addition, are spatially diverse in their materials and in their function.

The traditional instructional organization of schools dates back to 1846 with the founding of the Josiah Quincy School in Boston. Established by educator Horace Mann and inspired by contemporary Industrial Era attitudes on learning, the Quincy School provided a separate room for each class furnished with rows of benches for pupils. These rudimentary concepts were considered progressive at the time, and the model evolved little over the next 150 years other than becoming bigger and bulkier as it facilitated education for the nation's growing population of students.

However, within the past decade, research-based teaching and learning strategies have changed the function and form of today's model school. The most obvious change is away from the traditional school template of double-loaded corridors where students sitting in isolated classrooms in factory-like rows observe teachers working to impart their knowledge. This scenario is being transformed into one in which school facilities are organized into learning studios that are student-driven and are engaging, active, and participatory. These schools also have a contextual relevancy to their curriculum and utilize their site in support of environmentally thematic instruction.

The most fundamental change involves the classroom, the traditional organizing component of the schoolhouse. Today's classroom is being recalibrated to address the school's smallest common denominator – the student – on a design scale that engages on both intra-personal and inter-personal levels. Key to such individualization of personal space (for study, research, and reflection) is the individual student workstation. Currently being implemented across the U.S. in middle schools and high schools, these personalized work areas function in combination with wet and dry labs, small and large



A sampling of new schools represent the ongoing shift toward spaces that engage students. (clockwise from far left) Crosswinds Arts & Science Middle School in Woodbury, Minn., by Cuningham Group Architects of Minneapolis; photo courtesy the architect. Lorezo de Zavala Middle School in Irving, by F&S Partners; photo by Craig Blackmon, AIA. Denton High School, by VLK Architects; photo by Craig Kuhner. Ginnings Elementary School in Denton, by James R. Kirkpatrict Architect in Denton; photo by Cathy Zweighaft. Crosswinds received the Council for Educational Facility Planners International's 2002 James D. MacConnell Award. The school by F&S won an Innovation Award in the 2002 TASA/TASB school design competition.

group presentation spaces, and projects areas, and are all enhanced with digital and mobile communication technologies. The result is a learning place that is essentially more personal and relevant as each student is effectively connected to real places, real events, and real people – all in "real time" – anywhere in the world. (High-tech learning environments additionally challenge architects to provide a "high touch" element to their school designs with which to bridge the personal nature of learning with today's global research capabilities.)

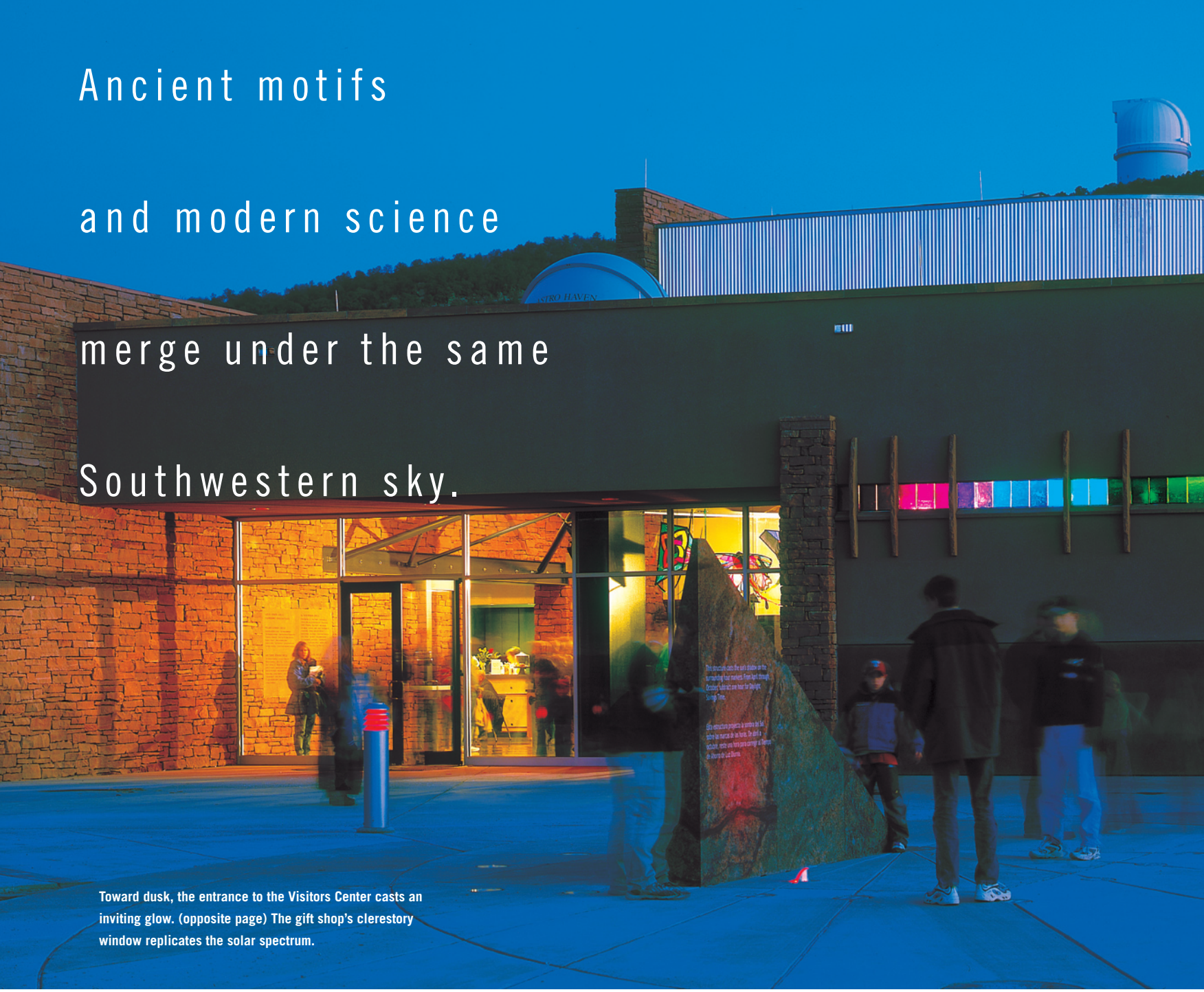
Another important shift in the design of classrooms is the use of daylighting, which is simply the illumination of interior spaces by natural light but is sometimes achieved only through sophisticated means. Often associated with sustainability, daylighting is shown through research as having a positive impact on student achievement, especially in math and reading. By no means a modern technology, daylighting was predominately used in pre-1950 schools until artificial light (relatively inexpensive back in those days of cheap energy costs) became the national norm for all interior spaces. Yet, as energy costs subsequently rose, strategies to eliminate the use of electricity became a major focus—sometimes at the expense of learning. Now, with documented benefits of daylighting on student achievement, student behavior, and improved test scores, educators and designers are introducing (or, some might say, reintroducing) daylighting as a response to each school's educational mandate, as well as in response to concerns for the reasonable life-cycle operational cost of school facilities.

Furnishing and equipping diverse learning environments is also a critical component in designing spaces required to support multiple intelligences, e.g., multi-disciplinarian teaming, spaces for authentic and project-based instruction, thematic curricula, dispersed administration, and team-teaching. Often left to chance, the furnishing and equipping of a school must be considered a significant component in an overall scheme designed to accomplish learning goals. As schools move away from "seat time" and toward a primary focus on students' skill development, emphasis will continue to be placed on the aspects of the total learning environment.

The redefinition of "school" – from teacher-centered instruction to student-centered learning – to connote a high-performance learning place is a response to a rigorous curriculum that is relevant and technology-enhanced, and its success requires advanced planning, educational and technical expertise, and design solutions that are simultaneously creative, flexible, and economical. Creating quality learning environments is more than a responsibility: it is an opportunity for architects to collaborate with teachers, students, administrators, business partners, industry practitioners, and community leaders in designing educational environments that achieve one common goal—the success of *all* students.

James A. Brady, AIA is director of school facilities for the Dallas office of Page Southerland Page.

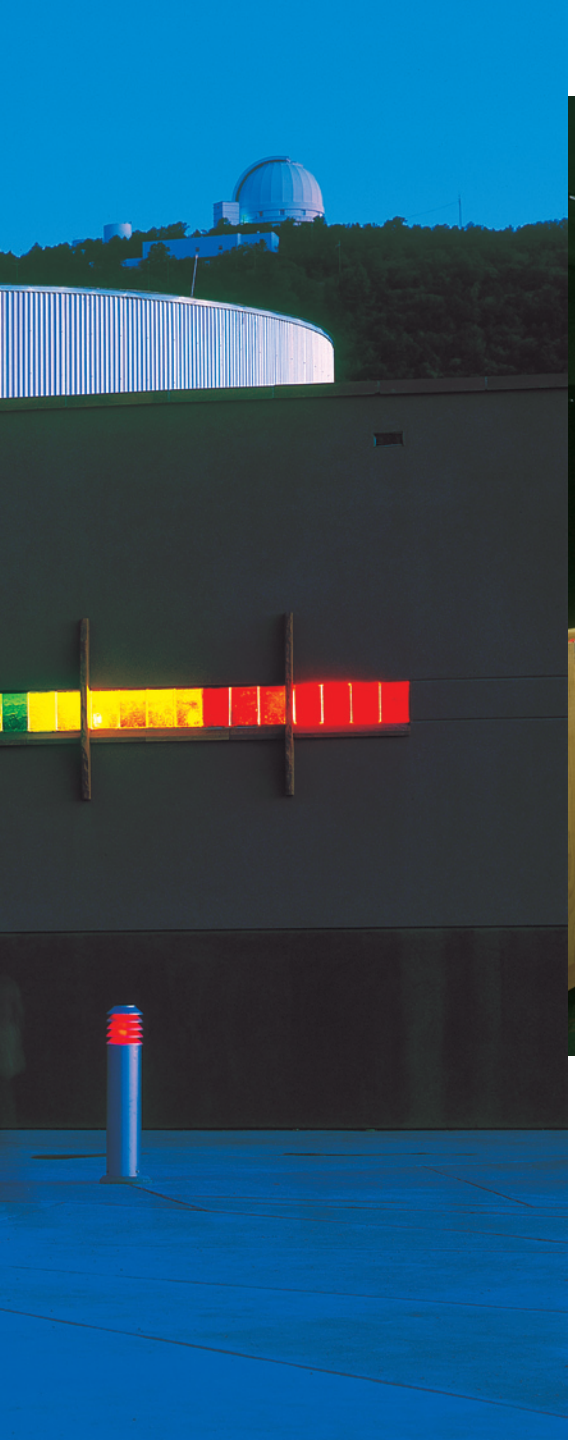
Ancient motifs and modern science merge under the same Southwestern sky.



Toward dusk, the entrance to the Visitors Center casts an inviting glow. (opposite page) The gift shop's clerestory window replicates the solar spectrum.

STARGAZING ACROSS SPACE AND TIME

by ED SOLTERO, AIA



PROJECT McDonald Observatory Visitors Center,Fort Davis
CLIENT The University of Texas at Austin
ARCHITECT Rhotenberry Wellen Architects
CONTRACTOR STR Constructors
CONSULTANTS RTR Engineers (structural); Landgraf, Crutcher & Associates (civil); Agnew Associates (MEP); Eleanor McKinney (landscape); Sears & Russell Consultants (exhibit design); Ulrich Diederich Graphic Design (signage)
PHOTOGRAPHER Hester + Hardaway

FASCINATION WITH THE NIGHTTIME SKY links mankind's myriad cultures over innumerable generations. Examples of early man's preoccupation with the heavens are found around the globe, from the Mayan peoples in Mesoamerica to the Jantar-Mantar in the Indian subcontinent to the Han Chinese in the Suchong planisphere. Across the American Southwest, the Anasazi built sophisticated observatories to track the movements of heavenly bodies. These ancestral Pueblo people in particular venerated the sun. In fact, their fear of its permanent disappearance caused them to devote tremendous amounts of time and resources toward "sun watching." Their concern with the cycles of the sun is evidenced in the astronomically significant orientations of their architecture.

Inferences from Pueblo cosmology abound in the recently completed Visitors Center at the University of Texas at Austin McDonald Observatory, located in the rugged and remote Davis Mountains of West Texas. Designed by Rhotenberry Wellen Architects of Midland and sited in a clearing at the base of Mount Locke, the new facility adds both a point of arrival and departure for astronomers and tourists visiting the McDonald Observatory complex atop the 6,791-foot peak. Scientists making the trek to this beautiful and relatively unadulterated place have described the experience as a "spiritual journey." Indeed, the trip attunes visitors to their often overlooked environs and conjures up visions of pilgrimages and ceremonies undertaken beneath the same vast Southwestern skies centuries ago.

Project architect Jim Rhotenberry drew inspiration for the Visitors Center from the architectural vestiges of those earlier watchers of the sun and sky. The anthropological study of ancient astronomy, specifically the ruins of Anasazi observatories, informed Rhotenberry's organization of the site. Circles and spirals inherent in the site design reference Pueblo reverential regard for cyclic patterns of the year, of the seasons and, to a further extent, of each day, namely: dawn, noon, twilight, and night, all integral components of the Puebloan sense of order and wholeness.

Upon entering the new facility, visitors participate in a procession which commences with a promenade through a ceremonial sundial court aptly framed by the building on the south and a stone wall positioned

The circular information desk and the curved shape of the gift shop reinforces the Visitors Center's organizational theme.

The facility is outfitted to teach students and educators about current scientific research.

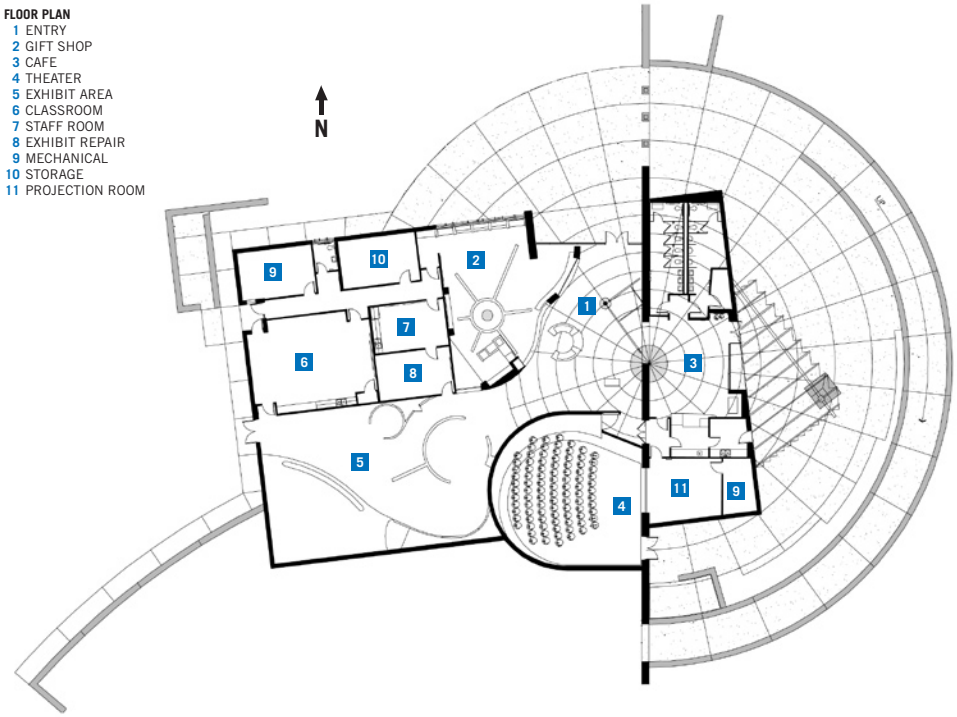
along the polar-north/south axis. Orientation of the prominent wall is derived from astronomical practices of the early Native Americans, most notably their "sun watching." In an additional gesture to the sun's symbolic importance, a heliostat (an instrument used to view the reflected solar spectrum, and this one adds another dimension by appearing more akin to a modern abstract sculpture) is located immediately inside the entrance into the building. Witnessing the intensity and richness of the sun's projected color spectrum and solar spots onto the exhibit area entrance wall was a humbling experience. A brainchild of engineers with the UT system, the heliostat also serves to guide people along their journey to discovery within the exhibit areas.

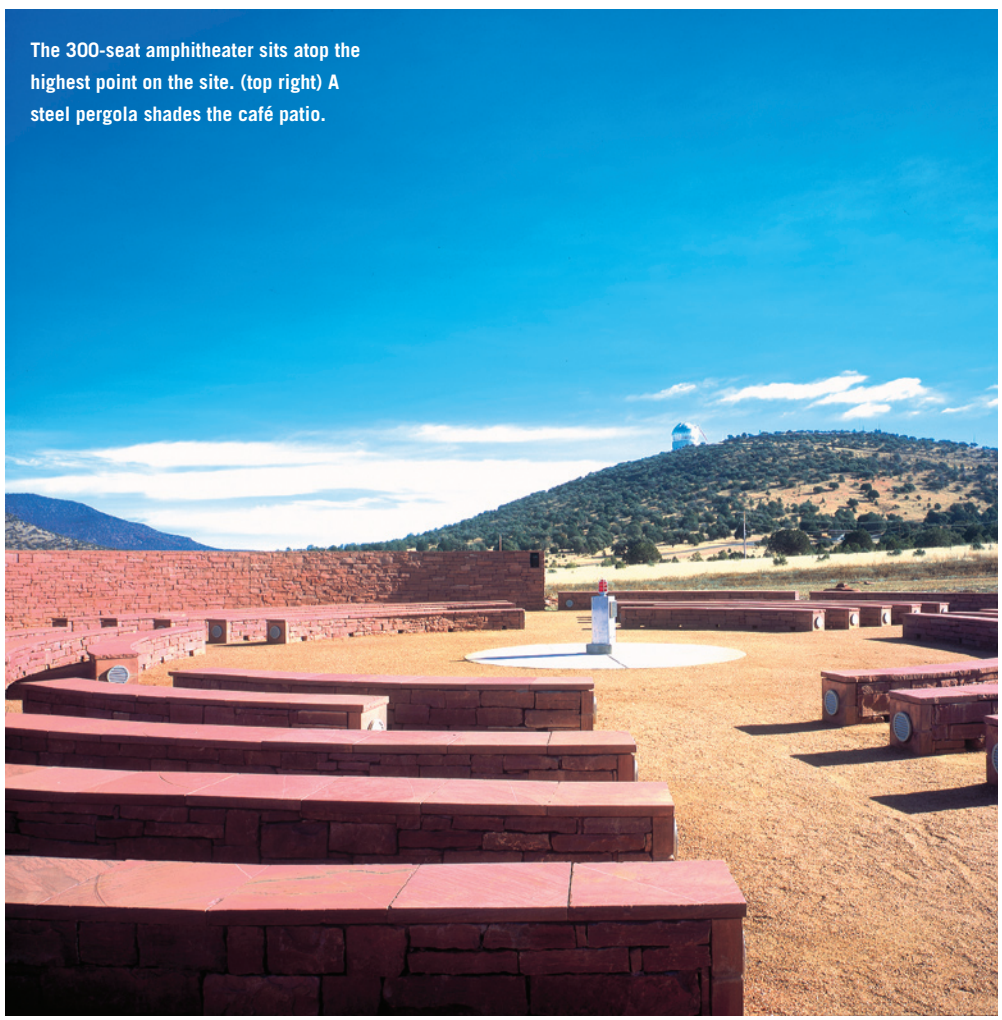
The 11,500-square-foot Visitors Center fulfills the goal set by Dr. Frank Bash, the director of the McDonald Observatory—to establish one of the nation's best small science centers, with a facility outfitted to teach students and teachers about scientific research. "It's important to McDonald Observatory to promote K-12 science education," Bash said recently. "This new facility will help us excite students about science and technology, and is designed to inspire them to pursue careers in those fields."

The Visitors Center is comprised of an 85-seat theater, exhibit space, a classroom, a gift shop, and a café. The theater, a tall volume with a 30-foot-tall ceiling and two meticulously located openings on the east wall, is where visitor orientation sessions are held. The room echoes the Anasazi's preoccupation with calendrics and the tracking of summer and winter solstices, as evidenced in two of the most magnificent sacred structures attributed to that ancestral race—the Great Kiva of Casa Rinconada in New Mexico's Chaco Canyon and Hovenweep Castle located near the Four Corners area. Also analogous to ancient places of ceremony and ritual, the interior layout of the exhibit area houses individual subject matter within circular enclosing walls.

Aside from the challenge of creating a place which caters to both students and tourists, the architect had to devise ways to minimize exterior light pollution and the actual setting of the structure vis-à-vis surrounding buildings not related to the observatory complex.

The gift shop, enclosed partially by the building's north wall, best exemplifies the issue of light control. A high-sitting narrow window constructed of colored glass segments, separated by red Pecos sandstone shards representing the Fraunhoffer solar absorption lines (dark lines separating bands of color in the spectrum of the sun), was designed to





The 300-seat amphitheater sits atop the highest point on the site. (top right) A steel pergola shades the café patio.

approximate a light spectrum when projected across the ceiling of the gift shop during the day. At night, the illuminated glass acts as an entry beacon to the facility. (Construction of the glass segments proved to be a daunting task for the glassmaker, according to Frank Ciancolo, senior program coordinator at the Visitors Center: "Several glass pieces were removed and recreated as a result of their scientific inaccuracy.") In addition, a successful light-control strategy was implemented through the recessed location of the entrance storefront, aided by the shielding effect of the adjacent axial stone wall. Complementing the light-control issues, skillful placement of the circular 300-seat open-air amphitheater—achieved by nestling it into the highest elevation on the site—is possibly the center's most powerful component. Here, having temporarily escaped from bright, light-polluted environments, is where people can truly appreciate the majesty of some of the darkest skies in the world. In this simple outdoor amphitheater, visitors attend the McDonald Observatory's popular "Star Parties" held at sunset every Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday. Shielded remarkably well from visual interruptions by low, red Pecos sandstone walls, visitors direct views in the only possible direction—upward to the heavens. Guided by calculations from staff scientists, the architect carefully aligned slots in the circular walls, seating aisles, and site boulders to form a functional, albeit rudimentary, astronomical calendar.

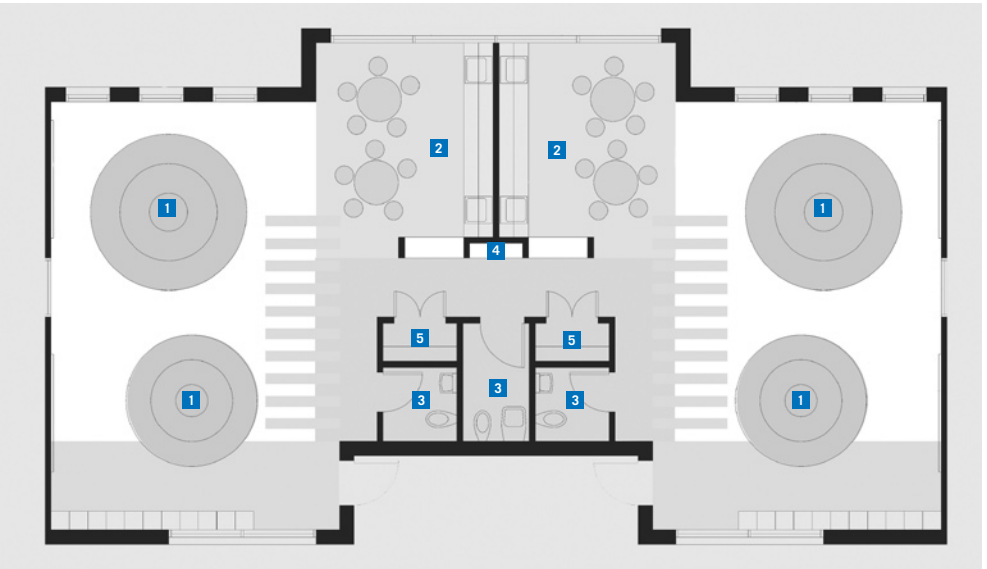
"Stargazing" continued on page 62

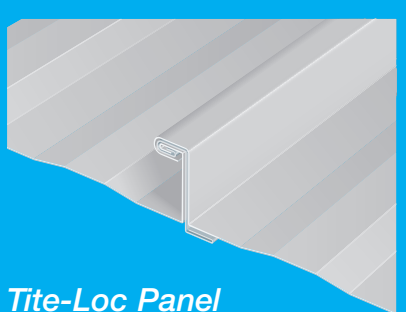
"Here for the Children" continued from page 25

pre-k centers. To its credit, the Kirksey design team, feeling strongly that the campuses needed trees, donated and planted all the courtyard trees at the Bear Boulevard, Lion Lane, and Tiger Trail schools. Still, the policy of creating identical schools can also neutralize the particularities that can emerge due to the differences among each school's faculty, parents, and administrators. Of Kirksey's four Schools for Early Learning, Tiger Trail may best demonstrate an openness on the part of the school administration toward modification and interaction with the building—an official attitude that clearly supports exploration and discovery. The children's sidewalk chalk drawings and the butterfly garden created by parents, teachers, and pupils both particularize and augment the Tiger Trail School, and offer open invitations for improvised learning and lasting enjoyment.

A principal of Longoria/Peters, Patrick Peters is also an associate professor of architecture and director of the Graduate Design/Build Studio at the University of Houston Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture.

FLOOR PLAN
1 ACTIVITY RUG
2 ART & SCIENCE CENTER
3 RESTROOM
4 SHELVING
5 CLOSET





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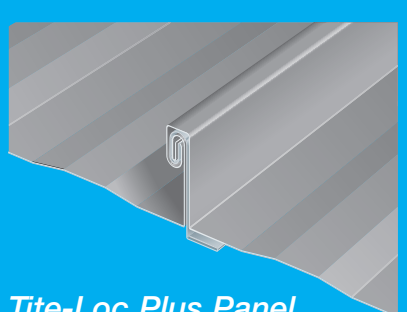

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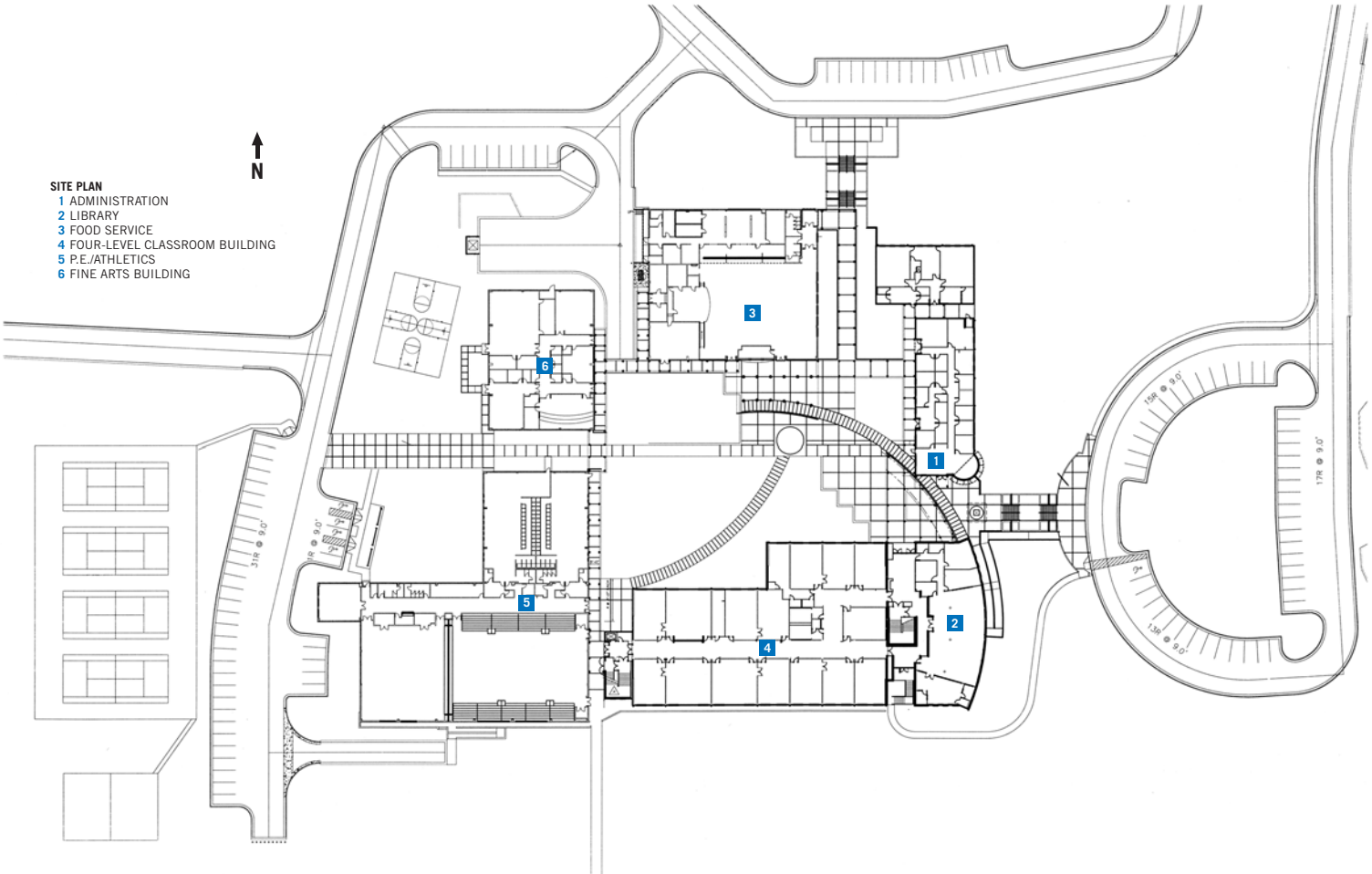

Key to the design was the elimination of most internal circulation and the breaking down of the prototype into its constituent parts, then stringing them together with a gracefully arcing canopy.

The group responded to the twin challenges of limited dollars and difficult topography with a design which embraces the site with simple but durable structures. This approach was distilled into the guiding conceptual plan by Overland. Key to the design was the elimination of most internal circulation and the breaking down of the prototype into its constituent parts—cafeteria, gymnasium, classrooms, and administrative offices. These literal building blocks were placed as buttresses ringing the eroded sides of a wooded knoll adjacent to Mary Searight District Park, a new municipal park on Austin's southern outskirts. The campus of buildings was focused inward on a courtyard formed from the crown of the knoll and tied together by a gracefully arcing canopy which strings the components together like the beads of a necklace.

Spaces between buildings contain cascades of steps or ramps and play spaces, including basketball courts which use the end walls of the buildings as vast backstops. The openness of the plan, reminiscent of the best school designs of the pre-air conditioned '50s, invites breezes and the infiltration of paths to the surrounding park. An innovative joint use agreement with Austin's Parks and Recreation Department allows users of the still largely undeveloped park to avail themselves of Paredes' playing fields, tennis courts, restrooms, and gymnasium when school is not in session.

Observing the busy courtyard, animated by pickup basketball games and enhanced with sunshades and breezeways, it is surprising to hear the Paredes team members speak of lessons learned when they recall their experiences on the project. The knowledge gained impels the Paredes designers to recommend a different approach to future school projects. Says Bob Shemwell of Overland: "If the school district were looking at this for lessons learned, then the board should be very clear about what they mean, in laying out their aspirations. This is not just about the dollars, about program management. The board should go into these projects saying, 'This is what we are about. This is what we value.' Just managing the dollars gets the program managers a C. To get an A they should aim to produce a (better) environment, one in which children can learn in a gracious and stimulating setting, one where they can grow up and learn about their world, the environment they inhabit."

Michael Shearin Guarino is design director at TeamHaas Architects in Austin.

RESOURCES **ATHLETIC AND RECREATIONAL SURFACING:** Seal Master Industries; **FENCES, GATES, AND HARDWARE:** Master Halco; **RECREATIONAL FACILITY AND PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT:** Douglas Tennis Systems; **MASONRY UNITS:** Featherlite; **METAL MATERIALS:** Bratton Steel; **LAMINATES:** Wilsonart; **WATERPROOFING AND DAMPPROOFING:** Chemrex; **MEMBRANE ROOFING:** Johns Manville; **METAL ROOFING:** American Buildings; **WOOD AND PLASTIC DOORS AND FRAMES:** Marlite; **METAL WINDOWS:** Alenco (All Seasons Commercial); **TILE:** American Olean; **ACOUSTICAL CEILINGS:** Celotex; **ATHLETIC SURFACING-INDOOR:** Robbins Sport Surfacing; **ACOUSTICAL WALL TREATMENTS:** Guilford of Maine; **PAINTS:** Sherwin-Williams; **LABORATORY CASEWORK:** Texwood

2002 TASA/TASB School Architecture Awards

Each year, the Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA) and the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) conduct a statewide school architecture competition. The competition recognizes the collaborative works of architects and school officials and is open to public school projects only.

On the following pages, *Texas Architect* presents a selection of the winning projects and firms.

Caudill Award

Sachse High School, Garland ISD, WRA Architects, Inc.

Design Award

Barbers Hill High School, Barbers Hill ISD, PBK Architects
Briscoe Junior High School, Lamar CISD, PBK Architects
Charles Goodson Middle School, Cypress-Fairbanks ISD, Bay Architects
Edward "Doc" Taylor High School, Alief ISD, Bay Architects
Foster High School, Lamar CISD, PBK Architects
King and Schmalz Elementary Schools, Katy ISD, SBWV Architects
The Academy of Irving ISD, Irving ISD, Powell/PSP

Educational Appropriateness Award

Barbers Hill High School, Barbers Hill ISD, PBK Architects
Briscoe Junior High School, Lamar CISD, PBK Architects
Caddo Mills High School, Caddo Mills ISD, Claycomb Associates
Edward "Doc" Taylor High School, Alief ISD, Bay Architects
Foster High School, Lamar CISD, PBK Architects
The Academy of Irving ISD, Irving ISD, Powell/PSP

Innovation Award

Barbers Hill High School, Barbers Hill ISD, PBK Architects
Briscoe Junior High School, Lamar CISD, PBK Architects
De Zavala Middle School, Irving ISD, F&S Partners
Foster High School, Lamar CISD, PBK Architects
Edward "Doc" Taylor High School, Alief ISD, Bay Architects
The Academy of Irving ISD, Irving ISD, Powell/PSP

Process of Planning Award

Briscoe Junior High School, Lamar CISD, PBK Architects
Cactus Ranch Elementary School, Round Rock ISD, O'Connell, Robertson & Associates
Canton Intermediate School, Canton ISD, Huckabee & Associates
Edward "Doc" Taylor High School, Alief ISD, Bay Architects
Robinson High School, Robinson ISD, Raso, Bailey, Dudley & Rose
The Academy of Irving ISD, Irving ISD, Powell/PSP

Value Award

Aledo High School, Aledo ISD, Huckabee & Associates
Barbers Hill High School, Barbers Hill ISD, PBK Architects
Briscoe Junior High School, Lamar CISD, PBK Architects
Cactus Ranch Elementary School, Round Rock ISD, O'Connell, Robertson & Associates
Canton Intermediate School, Canton ISD, Huckabee & Associates
Charles Goodson Middle School, Cypress-Fairbanks ISD, Bay Architects
Foster High School, Lamar CISD, PBK Architects
Granbury Middle School, Granbury ISD, Huckabee & Associates
King and Schmalz Elementary Schools, Katy ISD, SBWV Architects
Robinson High School, Robinson ISD, Raso, Bailey, Dudley & Rose

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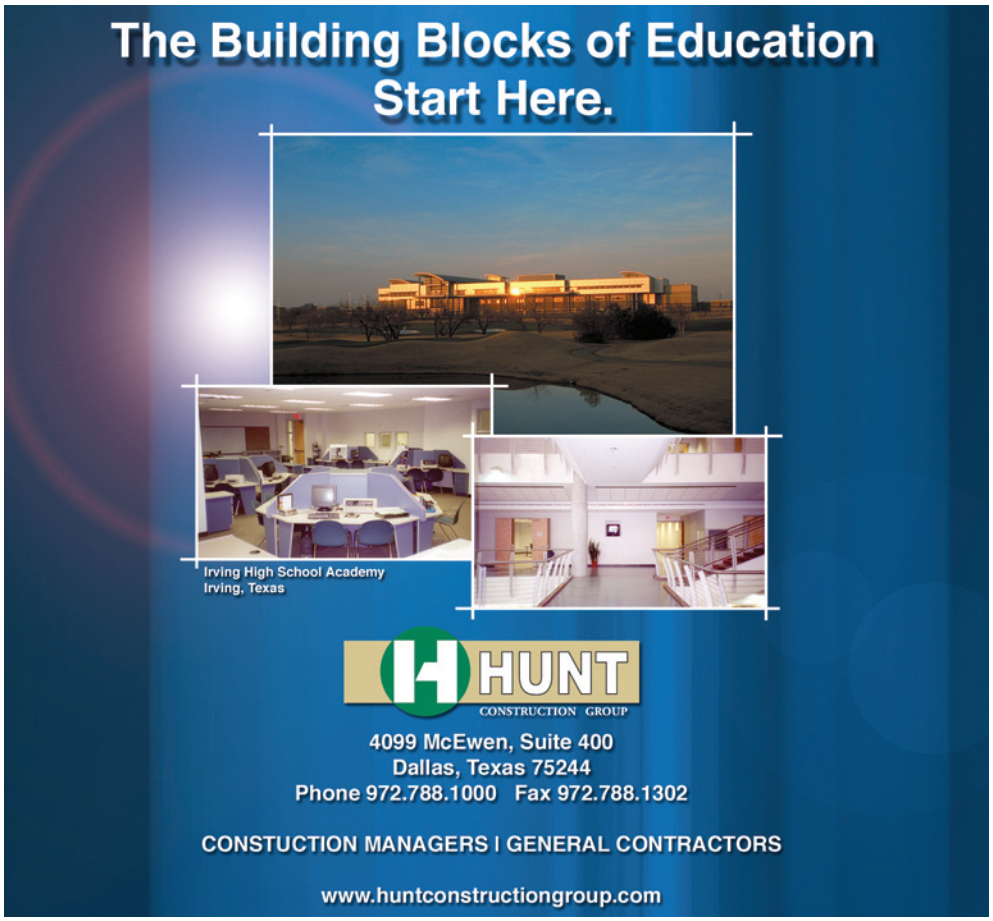

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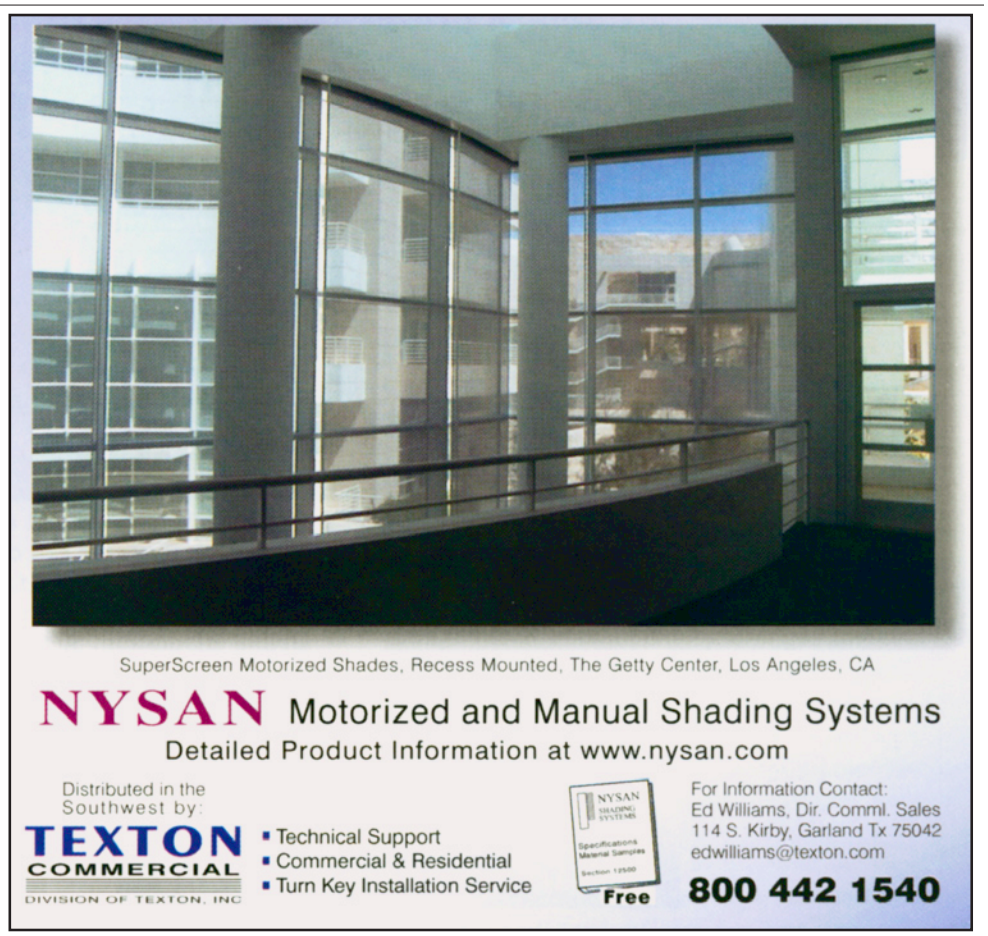

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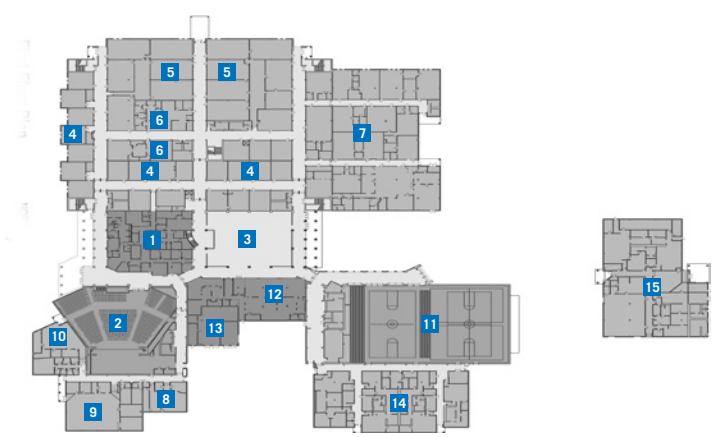
Sachse High School



FLOOR PLAN
1 ADMINISTRATION
2 AUDITORIUM
3 DINING COMMONS
4 CLASSROOMS
5 SCIENCE
6 LIFE SKILLS
7 CAREER & TECHNOLOGY
8 DRAMA
9 BAND
10 CHOIR
11 GYMNASIUM
12 KITCHEN
13 MECHANICAL
14 LOCKER ROOMS
15 FIELDHOUSE

PROJECT Sachse High School, Sachse
CLIENT Garland Independent School District
ARCHITECT WRA Architects
CONTRACTOR Gallagher Construction Management Services
CONSULTANTS Randy Cooper Consulting Engineers (structural); RLK Engineering (civil); S. Toub & Associates (MEP); Environs Group (landscape); H.G. Rice & Co. (food service); Amtech Roofing Consultants (roofing)
PHOTOGRAPHER Craig Piepenbrink

Caudill Award

Built on a 55-acre site, Sachse High School is the largest and most prominent public building in Sachse, a small town in northeast Dallas County. Completed in December 2001, this 315-thousand square-foot high school will accommodate a 2,300 study body. Before the construction of the high school, local city planners compiled a set of design guidelines to promote a civic identity that reflects images often considered "Texan." These specification standards inspired the mix of building materials, such as limestone and galvanized metal roofing, correlating with Texas vernacular architecture. The design of Sachse High School echoes this through the use of smooth and rough-faced concrete masonry in a limestone color, with galvalume standing-seam metal roofing at the building entrances. The two-story academic sections of the high school consists over 100 classrooms and a 10,000 square-foot library. A 1,000 seat auditorium (bottom) anchors the fine arts area, which also has rehearsal halls for band, orchestra, choir and theater. The gymnasium consists of three full basketball and volleyball courts which serves the physical education programs. Sachse High School expands its walls beyond student use, benefiting and serving the community. Academic wings of the school can easily be converted into a public assembly spaces. The focal point of the building is a two-story commons vicinity which function as a student dining area as well as a special events venue and public meeting room. The three major assembly areas--the gymnasium, auditorium, and the commons--can be utilized by different groups at the same time.

JACQUELINE PHUNG

RESOURCES **ATHLETIC AND RECREATIONAL SURFACING:** Vibra-Whirl; **RECREATIONAL FACILITY AND PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT:** Aalco Manufacturing; **CONCRETE MATERIALS:** Lattimore Materials; **MASONRY UNITS:** Acme; **CMU:** Palestine Concrete; **CAST STONE:** Advanced Cast Stone; **METAL MATERIALS:** Vulcraft; **RAILINGS AND HANDRAILS:** Alpha Industries; **ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK:** Ventwood; **LAMINATES:** Wilsonart; **WATERPROOFING AND DAMPPROOFING:** Sonneborn; **MEMBRANE ROOFING:** Johns Manville; **METAL ROOFING:** Berridge; **METAL DOORS AND FRAMES:** Piper-Weatherford; **OVERHEAD COILING DOORS:** Cookson; **GLASS:** AFGD; **GLAZED CURTAINWALL:** U.S. Aluminum; **TILE:** Daltile; **ACOUSTICAL CEILINGS:** USG; **WOOD FLOORING:** Horner Flooring; **VCT:** Domco Tarkett; **CARPET:** Mohawk; **ACOUSTICAL WALL TREATMENTS:** Decoustics, Tectum; **PAINTS:** Kelly-Moore; **METAL LOCKERS:** Lyon Metal Products; **LOUVER BLINDS:** Texton

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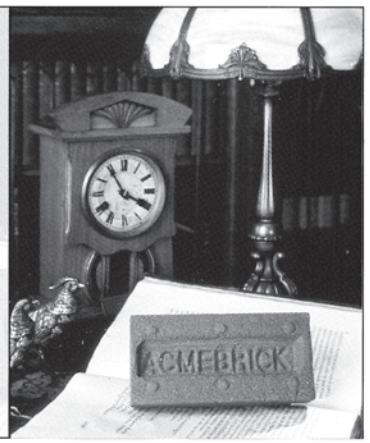

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The Academy of Irving ISD

FLOOR PLAN- LEVEL 2
1 CHEMISTRY LAB
2 BIOLOGY LAB
3 CLINICAL SKILLS LAB
4 LEARNING LAB
5 BEGINNING CLINICAL SKILLS LAB
6 LANGUAGE LAB
7 RESTROOM
8 WELLNESS CENTER
9 DENTAL LAB
10 MEDICAL/DENTAL TEAM ROOM
11 LEGAL LAB
12 COURTROOM LAB
13 CRIMINAL JUSTICE LAB
14 GENERAL SCIENCE & FORENSICS LAB
15 TEAM ROOM
16 MECHANICAL ROOM
17 LEGAL LAB

PROJECT The Academy of Irving ISD, Irving
CLIENT Irving Independent School District
ARCHITECT Powell/PSP, An Association of Milton Powell & Partners and Page Southerland Page
CONTRACTOR Hunt Construction Group
CONSULTANTS L.A. Fuess Partners (structural); Pacheco Koch Consulting Engineers (civil); Wrightson, Johnson, Haddon & Williams (acoustical and audio/visual); Newman, Jackson, Bieberstein (landscape); H.G. Rice & Co. (food service)
PHOTOGRAPHER Michael Lyon

Educational Appropriateness Award

Built on a 23-acre site in the Los Colinas area of Irving, the Academy of Irving ISD (top) is unique in many ways through the site's location, the specialized educational program, and the building itself. The Academy Of Irving ISD, completed in August 2001, is open to every Irving ISD student in grades nine through twelve. The building site of Irving was acquired "free" in a 50-year ground lease agreement with Dallas County Community College District in exchange for the college's right to use the building for evening and cooperative courses. Three floors contain the six academic specializations offered: advanced and applied technology; education and early childhood; entrepreneurship; legal; medical and dental; and visual arts and communication studies. Students "major" within one of these six specializations. The goal of these programs is to afford graduates a step up from their peers through career experience and early college credit. The building frames a central atrium (bottom) that opens up three levels, liberating the intense career-minded atmosphere with a view of the first-level food court. Each floor contains multiple lab facilities where students engage in hands-on learning for the project-based curricula. Interior finishes are burnished, stone-faced block and composite metal panels, sleek material which complement side railings and white walls. Since the school is constructed on a natural hillside, one can see views of an adjacent golf course and the various sites of Irving.

JACQUELINE PHUNG

RESOURCES **UNIT PAVERS:** Pavestone; **SITE, STREET, AND MALL FURNISHINGS:** Landscapeforms; **MASONRY UNITS:** Featherlite; **CAST STONE:** Advanced Cast Stone; **RAILINGS AND HANDRAILS:** Astro Sheet Metal; **ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORKS:** Lutz Woodworks; **WATERPROOFING AND DAMPPROOFING:** Miradri, Sonneborn; **WATER REPELLENTS:** ProSoCo; **ROOF AND WALL PANELS:** Alusuisse (Alcan Composites); **MEMBRANE ROOFING:** Soprema; **METAL ROOFING:** Berridge; **BALCONY PAVERS:** Westile; **WOOD AND PLASTIC DOORS AND FRAMES:** Algoma; **SPECIALTY DOORS:** Total Door, McKeon Rolling Steel Door; **ENTRANCES AND STOREFRONTS:** Vistawall; **GLAZED CURTAINWALL:** Vistawall; **SOUND RETARDANT DOORS:** Overly Door; **TILE:** Daltile; **ACOUSTICAL CEILINGS:** USG; **METAL CEILINGS:** Ceilings Plus; **FLUID APPLIED FLOORING:** Key Resin; **ACOUSTICAL WALL TREATMENTS:** Conwed; **PAINTS:** Sherwin-Williams; **OPERABLE PARTITIONS:** Modernfold

Robinson High School

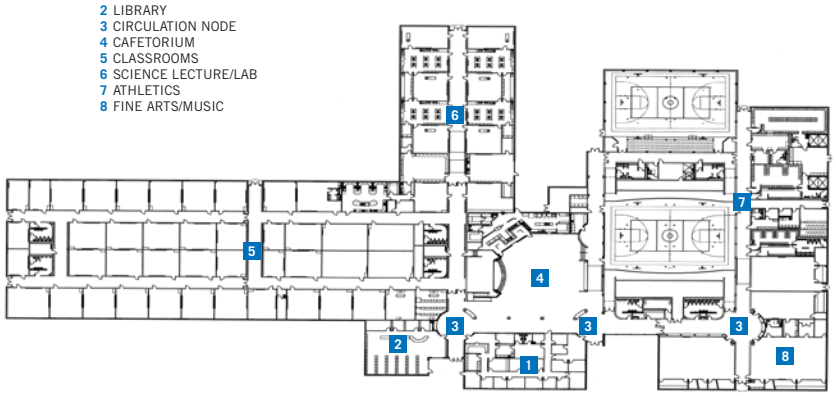
PROJECT Robinson High School, Robinson
CLIENT Robinson Independent School District
ARCHITECT Raso, Bailey, Dudley & Rose, Inc.
CONSTRUCTION MANAGER Centex Management Construction Technology, Ltd.
CONSULTANTS The Rogers Company (structural); Larry E. Langston & Associates (civil); Meers Engineering (MEP)
PHOTOGRAPHER Teresa Raso

Value Award

Robinson High School (top) sits on 36 acres. This new 133,000-square-foot educational facility was built to accommodate 860 students and provide the neighboring community easy access to the gymnasium, cafeteria, and library after school hours. The exterior masonry walls are doubled-wythe construction that achieves an R-11 rating while the roofing material achieves an R-20 rating. Inside, the building is divided into two "wing" sections. The west wing consists of 26 classrooms and the east wing contains the music/band and physical education/athletics departments. The cafeteria is built in a central location to separate the quiet academic area from activities taking place in the gym and musical areas. All four band halls were built to maximize acoustics while maintaining a distance from classrooms. To suppress the gymnasium's din, the architects integrated perforated metal deck ceilings and sound block in the walls. The corridors and central "nodes" (center) concepts were designed to assist in student pedestrian traffic. From these key nodes and corridors, traffic has multi-directional routes throughout the school. These major corridors and central nodes will support future expansion and adjustments. Outside, both athletics fields and facilities are positioned on site to maximize site usage and accommodate vehicular traffic.

JACQUELINE PHUNG

FLOOR PLAN
1 ADMINISTRATION
2 LIBRARY
3 CIRCULATION NODE
4 CAFETORIUM
5 CLASSROOMS
6 SCIENCE LECTURE/LAB
7 ATHLETICS
8 FINE ARTS/MUSIC



RESOURCES **ATHLETIC AND RECREATIONAL SURFACING:** Robbins Floors; **RETAINING WALLS:** Keystone (Jewell Concrete Products); **RECREATIONAL FACILITY AND PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT:** J.L. Hammett; **CONCRETE MATERIALS:** Lehigh White Cement; **MASONRY UNITS:** Acme Brick (Quality Brickworks, Masonry Contractor); **SPLIT-FACE CMUS:** Jewell Concrete Products (Quality Brickworks, Masonry Contractor); **METAL DECKING:** Alamo Steel; **RAILINGS AND HANDRAILS:** K&M Services; **LAMINATES:** Wilsonart; **TILE:** Daltile; **ACOUSTICAL CEILINGS:** Armstrong; **WOOD FLOORING:** Robbins Floors; **FLUID APPLIED FLOORING:** Stonhard; **PAINTS:** Sherwin-Williams; **GRANDSTANDS AND BLEACHERS:** Alamo Steel

Edward 'Doc' Taylor High School

PROJECT Edward "Doc" Taylor High School, Houston
CLIENT Alief Independent School District
ARCHITECT Bay Architects
CONTRACTOR J.E. Dunn Construction
CONSULTANTS Schmitz Lamb Engineers (structural); Brooks & Sparks (civil); R.H. George & Associates (MEP); Frank Clements & Associates (food service); Wrightson Johnson Haddon & Williams (acoustics and theatrical); Bos Lighting Design (lighting)
PHOTOGRAPHER Jud Haggard

Design Award

Completed in June 2001, Edward "Doc" Taylor High School (top) was built to house more than 3,000 students and provide an exciting and comfortable setting for the faculty, students, and visitors alike. Entering the school, one discovers a large central rotunda (center). This sector provides students directional access to the library, administrative suites, cafeteria, and outdoor courtyard. The rotunda also acts as a sound barrier by sectioning off the north academic hall from the south hall of elective activities. Other important architecture features includes state-of-the-art theater and technology integration. The theater facility is comparable in sound and quality with other popular metropolitan theaters. The professional design of the theater provides an exceptional learning environment for the theater arts. The school also provides six computers in each classroom for easier media and online access. Large stairways and windows designed throughout the building expose the school to illuminating natural light. Outside, trees line the campus, enabling students to feel a sense of division between the building and its natural setting. Students can also feel safe inside and outside the school because campus's security is monitored with 119 digital security cameras. These cameras are accessible from any computer with Internet access and security passwords. In addition to winning the 2002 TASA/TASB Design Award, Taylor High School also received TASA/TASB's Innovation Award, Process of Planning Award, and Educational Appropriateness Award.

JACQUELINE PHUNG

FLOOR PLAN
1 MAIN ENTRY
2 LIBRARY
3 ADMINISTRATION
4 ROTUNDA
5 CAFETERIA
6 KITCHEN
7 LOCKERS
8 SPECIAL EDUCATION
9 MATH
10 SOCIAL STUDIES
11 ENGLISH
12 FOREIGN LANGUAGE
13 JOURNALISM
14 MUSIC
15 ART
16 THEATER
17 GYM
18 DANCE
19 HEALTH
20 WEIGHT ROOM

RESOURCES **ATHLETIC AND RECREATIONAL SURFACING:** Vibra-Whirl; **SITE, STREET, AND MALL FURNISHINGS:** Wabash Valley; **MASONRY UNITS:** Acme, Endicott; **LAMINATES:** Wilsonart, Formica; **WATERPROOFING AND DAMPPROOFING:** Henry Company; **MEMBRANE ROOFING:** Firestone; **METAL ROOFING:** Berridge; **SPECIALTY DOORS:** Overly, Won-Door; **ENTRANCES AND STOREFRONTS:** Vistawall; **TILE:** Daltile; **TERRAZZO:** National Tile & Terrazzo; **ACOUSTICAL CEILINGS:** Conwed; **WOOD FLOORING:** Conner; **WALL COVERINGS:** Essex; **ACOUSTICAL WALL TREATMENTS:** Conwed; **PAINTS:** ICI Dulux; **LABORATORY CASEWORK:** Advanced Lab Concepts

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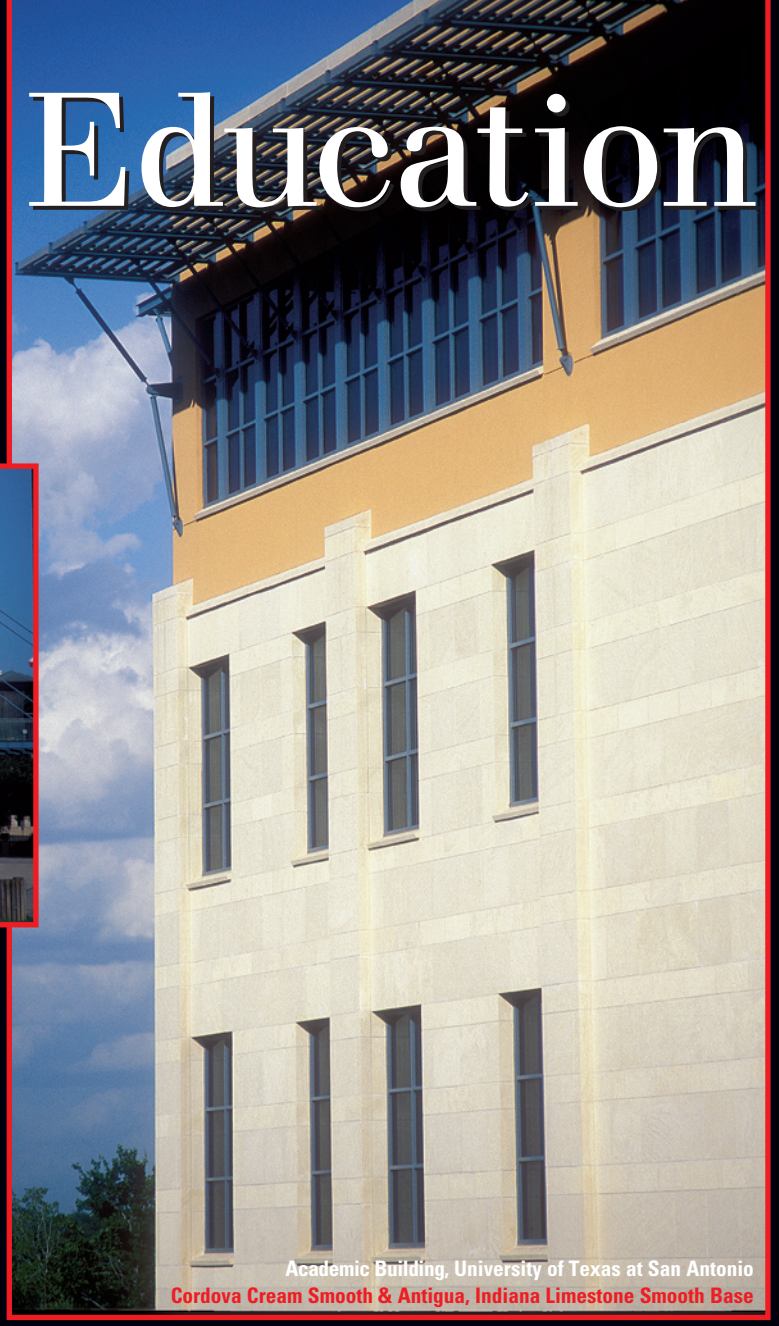

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Cactus Ranch Elementary School

PROJECT Cactus Ranch Elementary School, Round Rock
CLIENT Round Rock Independent School District
ARCHITECT O'Connell Robertson & Associates
CONTRACTOR American Constructors
CONSULTANTS Datum Engineers (structural); Cunningham-Allen (civil); Coleman & Associates (landscape)
PHOTOGRAPHER AtelierWong Photography

Process of Planning Award

Cactus Ranch Elementary School (top) was completed in August 2001, in just 11 months. This 94,000-square-foot campus was built to fill the needs of Round Rock Independent School District, which is one of the fastest growing school districts in Texas. The campus has several features such as a media center, cafeteria, gymnasium, music room, science labs, art rooms, computer labs, life skills lab, resource rooms, and commons areas. The media center (bottom left) is the heart of the school, containing community gathering spaces, and wireless computer technology. Dynamic natural light and colorful suspended panels breathe life into the center, welcoming visitors and inviting students to learn. Cutting-edge equipment, multimedia technology, and ample storage areas encourage a first-class learning environment. The school's advanced technology infrastructure enables a wireless network and opens the door to digital teaching. Four commons areas, supporting team-teaching, group activity, and guest presentations, foster communication beyond the standard classroom setting. Colors, patterns, and textures (bottom right) provide an impression of scale, direction, and fun. Massive building volumes are articulated on a smaller scale with masonry patterning composed of various textures and colors. Terrazzo, CMU block, and plastic laminate wall protection were selected for a 50-year life cycle. Daylighting, tinted glass, high insulation, individual thermostat controls, and heat recovery systems comfortably maximize energy efficiency.

JACQUELINE PHUNG

FLOOR PLAN
1 MEDIA CENTER/LIBRARY/ COMMUNITY MEETING AREA
2 CAFETORIUM
3 STAGE
4 KITCHEN
5 GYMNASIUM/MOTOR SKILLS LAB
6 ADMINISTRATION AREA
7 LIFE SKILLS CLASSROOM
8 MUSIC ROOM
9 ART ROOM
10 SCIENCE ROOM
11 COMMONS AREA
12 COMPUTER LAB
13 PRE-KINDERGARTEN
14 KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS
15 FIRST GRADE CLASSROOMS
16 SECOND GRADE CLASSROOMS
17 THIRD GRADE CLASSROOMS
18 FOURTH GRADE CLASSROOMS
19 FIFTH GRADE CLASSROOMS
20 PLAYGROUND
21 ART AND SCIENCE OUTDOOR LAB
22 RESOURCES AREA

RESOURCES **REACREATIONAL FACILITY AND PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT:** Miracle Recreation Equipment; **MASONRY UNITS:** Featherlite; **LAMINATES:** Wilsonart, Formica, Nevamar; **PLASTIC AND SOLID POLYMER FABRICATIONS:** Santana; **WAINSCOT PANEL SPECIALISTS:** Interior Surface Systems; **WATER REPELLENTS:** Chemprobe; **EXTERIOR INSULATION AND FINISH SYSTEMS:** STO; **ROOF AND WALL PANELS:** AEP Span; **SIDING:** AEP Span; **MEMBRANE ROOFING:** Johns Manville; **METAL ROOFING:** Berridge; **FASCIA AND SOFFIT PANELS:** Berridge; **WOOD AND PLASTIC DOORS AND FRAMES:** Buell; **METAL WINDOWS:** Kawneer; **GLASS:** PPG; **TILE:** Daltile; **TERRAZZO:** General Polymers; **ACOUSTICAL CEILINGS:** Armstrong; **METAL CEILINGS:** McNichols; **FLUID APPLIED FLOORING:** Robbins Sports Surfaces; **ACOUSTICAL WALL TREATMENTS:** Tectum, Conwed; **PAINTS:** Sherwin-Williams; **CARPET:** Dupont; **SIGNAGE AND GRAPHICS:** ASI

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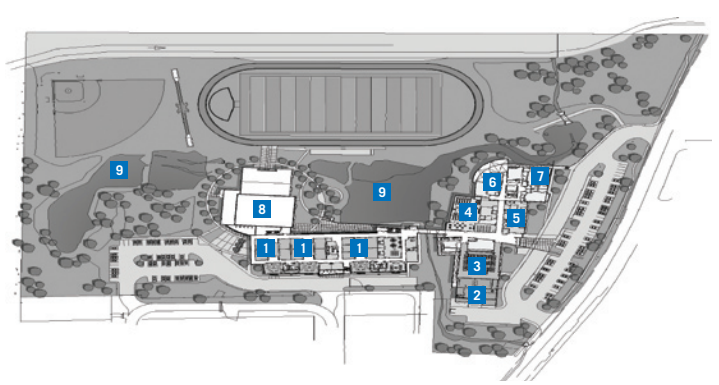
Lorenzo De Zavala Middle School

PROJECT Lorenzo De Zavala Middle School, Irving
CLIENT Irving Independent School District
ARCHITECT F&S Partners, Inc.
CONTRACTOR Satterfield & Pontikes, Inc.
CONSULTANTS Datum Engineering (structural); Boyle Engineering Corporation (civil); G&S Consulting Engineers (mechanical); Garcia and Associates (plumbing and electrical); Amtech Roofing Consultants (roofing); H.G. Rice & Co. (food service); Mesa Design Group (landscape); Gee Consultants (soil)
PHOTOGRAPHER Craig Blackmon, AIA

Innovation Award

With its recent completion in July 2002, the new Lorenzo De Zavala Middle School (top left) is not just another middle school, it is a living laboratory. Built on a sloping 22-acre site, the wetland (top right), a low area where the land is saturated with water, becomes the figurative and literal heart of the 850-student school campus. The school is comprised of three buildings connected by a central circulation spine. The administrative wing houses the media center, cafeteria, administrative offices, and arts/music classrooms. The education wing includes a 38 foot-long glass-enclosed bridge which spans a creek to connect the second floor. The third building is a one-story, two-court gymnasium with reverse-fold bleachers and locker rooms. A major concept in the design of the school is the formation of "pods." Each pod has four classrooms, a science classroom, and a commons classroom. Each pod serves as "a school within a school" creating a nuturing team-like environment for the students of each grade. F&S Partners implemented several glass windows (bottom) throughout the school to bring as much natural light into the school as possible. This way, students will have constant outdoor views as they move through the hallways of the school. Earth tones and birch doors were the color choices to link the school with the surrounding natural environment. In the school, the grand stairs and enclosed bridge are open to view the wetland. All the stairs in the school are wide, allowing students to personally interact.

JACQUELINE PHUNG



FLOOR PLAN
1 POD
2 KITCHEN
3 CAFETORIUM
4 MEDIA CENTER/LIBRARY
5 ADMINISTRATION
6 ART DEPARTMENT
7 MUSIC DEPARTMENT
8 GYMNASIUM
9 WETLANDS

RESOURCES **SITE, STREET, AND MALL FURNISHINGS:** Dura Act Stone; **TILT-UP CONCRETE PANELS:** Satterfield & Pontikes; **METAL DECKING:** Epic Metal Corporation; **ALUMINUM WALL LADDERS:** Alaco; **ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK:** Howard Mckinney, Inc.; **LAMINATES:** Wilsonart; **WATERPROOFING AND DAMPPROOFING:** Miradri; **ROOF AND WALL PANELS:** Kalwall; **JOINT SEALANTS:** Sonneborn; **EXPANDING FOAM SEALANTS:** Emseal; **METAL DOORS AND FRAMES:** Overhead Doors; **WOOD AND PLASTIC DOORS AND FRAMES:** VT Industries; **ENTRANCES AND STOREFRONTS:** Kawneer; **UNIT SKYLIGHTS:** Naturalite Skylights; **STRUCTURED GLASS CURTAINWALL:** Kawneer; **TILE:** Daltile; **ACOUSTICAL CEILINGS:** Epic Metal Corporation; **LAMINATE FLOORING:** Armstrong; **WALL COVERINGS:** Koroseal, Kenmark; **PAINTS:** Sherwin-Williams

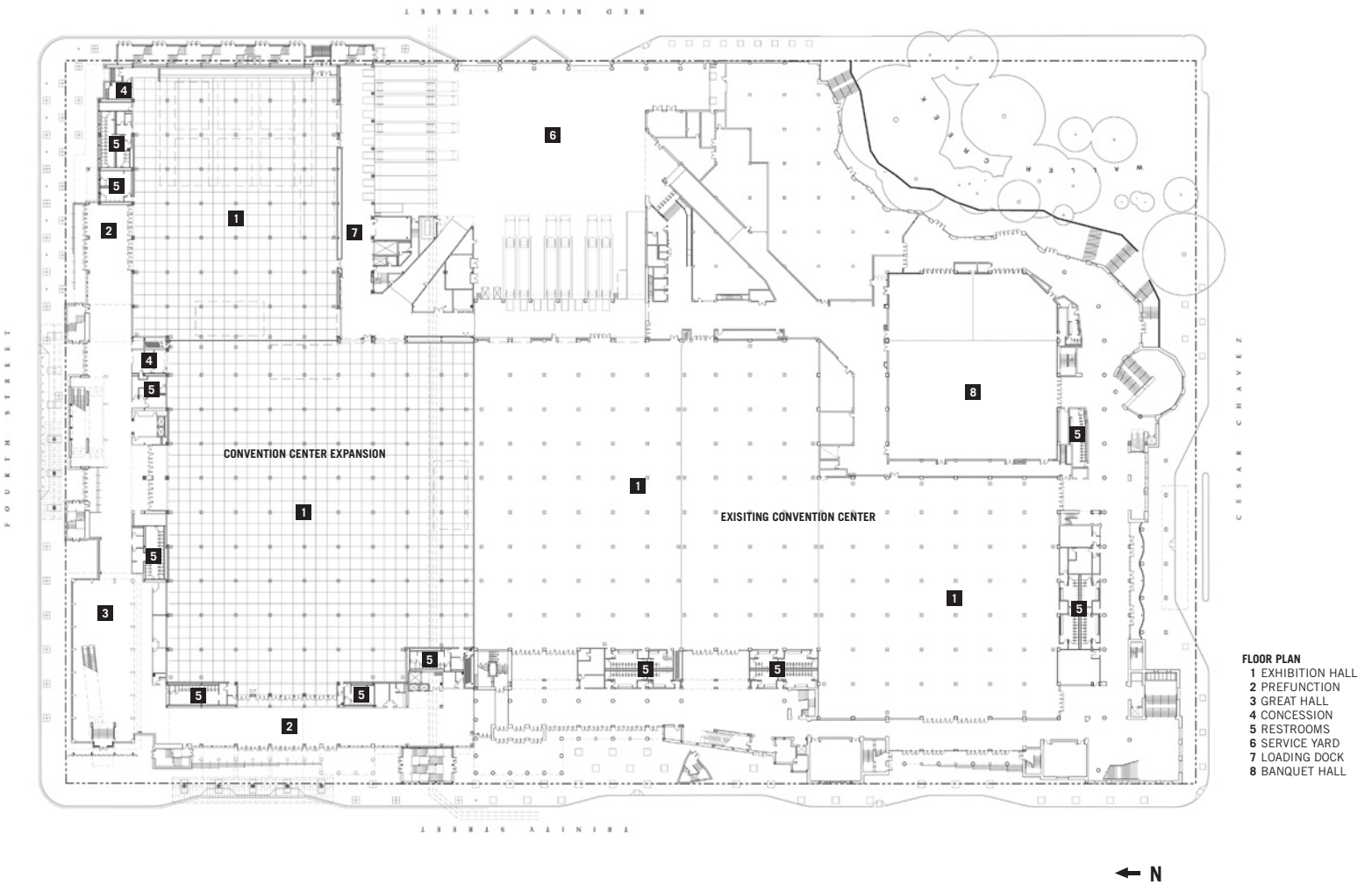
'More Cityscape Than Building'

by LAWRENCE CONNOLLY, AIA

The design architect of Austin's expanded convention center discusses his latest large public project

The glass screen at the northwest corner is a work in progress. Translucent panels with photovoltaic cells will be positioned to face southwest.

PROJECT Austin Convention Center Expansion, Austin
CLIENT City of Austin Management Services
ARCHITECT Page Southerland Page
ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS Cotera, Kolar, Negrete & Reed, Limbacher and Godfrey Architects
CONTRACTOR SpawGlass Contractors
PROJECT MANAGERS Gilbane Building Co./Faulkner Construction
CONSULTANTS Architectural Engineers Collaborative (structural); Boner Associates (audio/visual/acoustics); OTM Engineering (data communications); JEAcoustics (HVAC sound control); Rolf Jensen & Associates (fire protection); Trinity Engineering Testing Corp. (geotechnical); fd2s (signage); The Landscape Collaborative (landscape design); Kroll Schiff and Associates (security system design); KLW Engineering (MEP); Jack White & Associates (roofing)
PHOTOGRAPHER Tim Griffith



WITH THE OPENING LAST APRIL OF THE expansion to the Austin Convention Center, the City of Austin not only doubled the size of its premier meeting facility to a total of 810,000 square feet. The city also gained a refreshing new physical expression of its national status as a high-tech community.

Expectations proved unfounded that the expansion would be a mere continuation of the 10-year-old convention center. Besides the challenge of designing a new facility that held its own against the original, architect Lawrence W. Speck of Page Southerland Page also faced several design requirements, the least of which were a highly demanding building program, a constricted site, and, of course, a limited budget.

While the expansion seamlessly continues the effective wayfinding and scaled-down massing principles of the original, it is clearly not a fraternal twin but a sibling that appears smarter, younger, and more transparent. With an emphasis on a metal skin rather than one of stone like the original, the new facility reflects an Austin that has evolved since 1992. Known less these days (for better or worse) as a paragon of laid-back Hill Country earthiness, the city now represents itself as a mecca for high-tech industry. The expansion therefore represents a more modern time and a different place. This is best represented on its northwest corner by an impressively sophisticated glass pavilion which serves as the new "front door" of the convention center. The pavilion encloses a 90-foot-tall atrium that links its ground-level exhibition halls with ballroom/meeting space above. On the pavilion's west facade is a large glass screen containing a series of translucent panels with photovoltaic cells for efficient solar collection. This glass screen – equal parts architecture and sculpture, it's a collaborative effort between the architect and New York artist Jamie Carpenter – is a *tour de force* in steel and shingled glass and visually links the convention center complex with surrounding urban districts.

Perhaps most important, the Austin Convention Center Expansion is a good urban neighbor. The pavilion's transparent atrium creates a symbiotic relationship with the historic Brush Park to the north and the downtown core to the west. Also, continuing the precedent of respectfully addressing the street with symmetrical termini like the original building's articulated gambrel roof with its large faceted oculus and marquee to Second Street, the expansion faces Third Street with an elegantly detailed stainless steel scrimmed stairwell and Neches Street with storefronted escalators.

Ten years ago, when the Texas Society of Architects' annual convention was held in Austin's new convention center (also designed by PSP), I joined a tour hosted by Speck of that project. It was the first of two large projects designed by the firm, the second (this one with Gensler's Houston office) being the Barbara Jordan Passenger Terminal at Austin's new airport which opened in 1999. Recently, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to walk with Speck on a tour of his latest big project a few months after the owner assumed occupancy. Excerpts from our conversation follow.

***TA* Was the expansion the result of your own master plan?**

LS Yes. We did a set of District Design Guidelines when we did the original building, which included a proposal to expand on the two blocks just north of the site and create a new "front door" on Fourth Street at Brush Square. Because the expansion site was half the size of the original, the assumption was that the new phase would be half the size of the first. But by the time rolled around to start planning the new building, the convention center had been so successful that the city wanted to double its size. That meant twice the density of the first building. Like in the original, we managed to keep the big box of the exhibit space in the center of the site and ring it with smaller, more active spaces on the periphery. Unlike the original, we stacked the ballroom and some meeting rooms above the exhibit halls, also ringing them with prefunction spaces and lobbies. Another significant difference between the two phases lies in the response of the peripheral elements to their varied surroundings. The first building was faceted on one edge to respond to the shape of the Waller Creek and was made partly of rough-faced limestone to match the character of the creek bed. The new building is firmly within the downtown grid, has great views of the skyline in two directions, and has a long face with north light available. It is, therefore, lighter, brighter, and more open that the original.

It doesn't look bigger than the original.

Good. It wasn't supposed to. We tried to step the upper floor back, especially along the Trinity Street face, to diminish the apparent bulk. That gave us an opportunity to provide generous terraces off all of the prefunction spaces upstairs.

How were the two phases joined?

We knew the expansion would occur on the north side, so we deliberately chose a metal material on that side of the building that we could match years later in order to provide a seamless appearance. The joint between the two was originally intended to be a void which would be the terminus of Third Street looking east. We planned it to be flanked by metal-faced volumes on either side—one old and one new. When we had to accommodate the much larger program we needed the footprint space so could not leave a void. Instead we placed a large stair tower which is faced in a very delicate woven stainless steel mesh. It is so transparent and mysterious it is almost a void.

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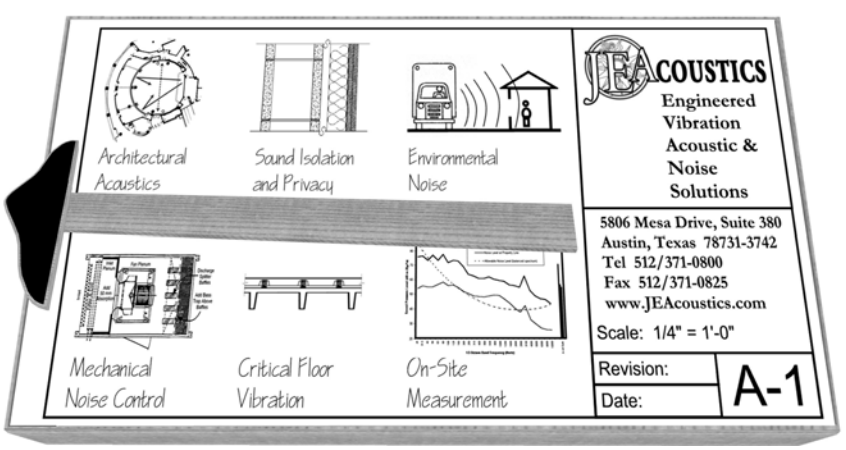
(opposite page) Exterior stairwells establish a visual rhythm on the east side. (above left) The engineering of the pavilion's interior is explicitly detailed. (above right) The pavilion's north side of glass panels with ceramic frit shading engages the nearby entertainment district.

The center with the expansion is so big, it seems you never really see it all at once.

You don't. I think the original concept of breaking the huge volume of the complex up into smaller-scaled pavilions is much clearer now that the expansion is complete. The center becomes more cityscape than building. Each piece has the freedom to respond to the varied conditions around the edge of the site and to develop a character of its own according to its role in the larger building. The rotunda and the palazzo in the original building and the atrium in the new part



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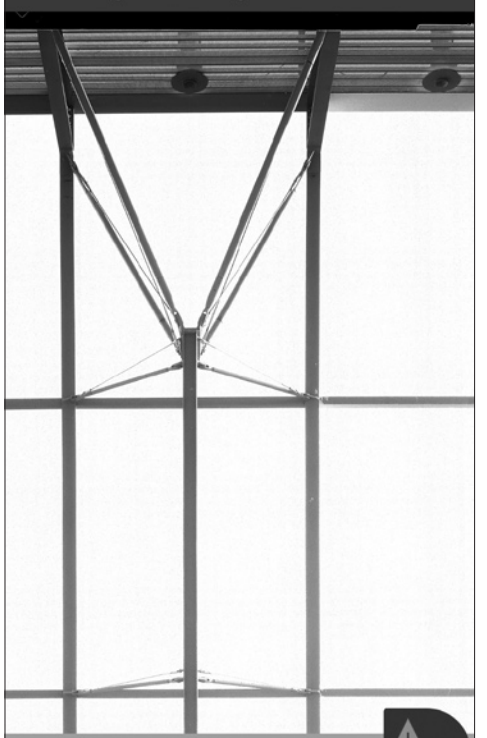
Austin Convention Center Expansion
Architect: *Page Southerland Page*



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act as landmarks and anchors both inside and out, assisting with wayfinding and orientation as well as giving a civic character.

What sort of flexibility does the expansion allow?

The new center can put on five conventions simultaneously, or one very large convention, or anything in between. The recent TSA convention took two of the five venues.

It seems that when you look down a hallway you can see outside. That seems to follow up on some of the wayfinding from the airport.

We really started looking seriously at wayfinding in the original convention center. We have excellent signage, but it is always better if people can just find their way around intuitively. We try to keep the plan and circulation in these big buildings dead simple and then use visual keys like the outdoors or landmark spaces to orient users.

In a convention center, people move in a lot of accoutrements and even clutter. How do you feel about this kind of inhabitation of the building?

In *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, Venturi writes that our buildings must "survive the cigarette machine," meaning that they must be strong enough – like Grand Central Station, which he uses as an example – to contain the vitality of everyday inhabitation without getting lost in it. We tried to do this with spaces like the atrium in particular where a great deal of event-specific inhabitation can occur without diminishing the character of the space.

Lawrence Connolly, AIA, is a contributing editor of *Texas Architect*.

Inside the new "front door," an elegant 90-foot-tall atrium welcomes visitors to Austin's expanded convention center.

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"Stargazing" continued from page 41

The selection of materials is equally sensitive and meant to evoke building traditions indigenous to the region. The building's exterior is a simulated dry-stack of native red sandstone (quarried from the nearby town of Pecos), which achieves a rugged quality that responds to the area's scrubby terrain of mountains and plains dotted with piñon, mesquite, alligator bark juniper, and buffalo grass, and to the association with ancient archaeological ruins. The exterior theater volume is clad in corrugated tin metal in deference to "high technology" and the exterior skins of the multiple telescope silos that punctuate the surrounding area, while earth-colored synthetic stucco quietly weaves the multiple parts together. Transition from exterior to interior is equally seamless, achieved by carrying inside the building the same "dry-stack" sandstone veneer of the north-south axial wall. The palette of interior finishes also includes simple stained concrete floors with granite inlays and painted gypsum-board walls.

In a metaphorical sense, the Visitors Center is a modern-day interpretation of the observation rooms and towers of ancient Southwest cultures. Where those structures of yore served as places where interpretation of celestial activity influenced the selection of emperors and generals, predicted eclipses, set calendars for festivals, and established dates for planting and harvesting, the new facility fulfills equally important roles in today's society—by educating students and visitors from around the world about scientific discovery, as well as providing a wonderful spot to enjoy the eternally captivating pastime of stargazing. Perhaps a journey to view the dark skies of this area of West Texas is summed up best through the words of the early seventeenth century Spanish missionary Bernabé Cobo: "The movements of the heavenly bodies are an admirable thing, well known and manifest to all peoples. There are no people, no matter how barbaric and primitive, that do not raise up their eyes, take note, and observe with some care and admiration the continuous and uniform course of heavenly bodies."

Ed Soltero, AIA, is a contributing editor of *Texas Architect*.

RESOURCES **SANDSTONE:** Texas Stone Products; **GRANITE:** Cold Springs Granite; **LAMINATES:** Nevamar; **SOLID SURFACING:** DuPont Corian; **EXTERIOR INSULATION AND FINISH SYSTEMS:** TEIFS Wall Systems; **METAL WALL PANELS:** Berridge; **ENTRANCES AND STOREFRONTS:** Kawneer; **CAST GLASS:** Dependable Glassworks; **CARPET:** Lees; **CONCRETE FLOOR STAIN AND WAX:** Kemiko; **STEEL GRATING:** IKG

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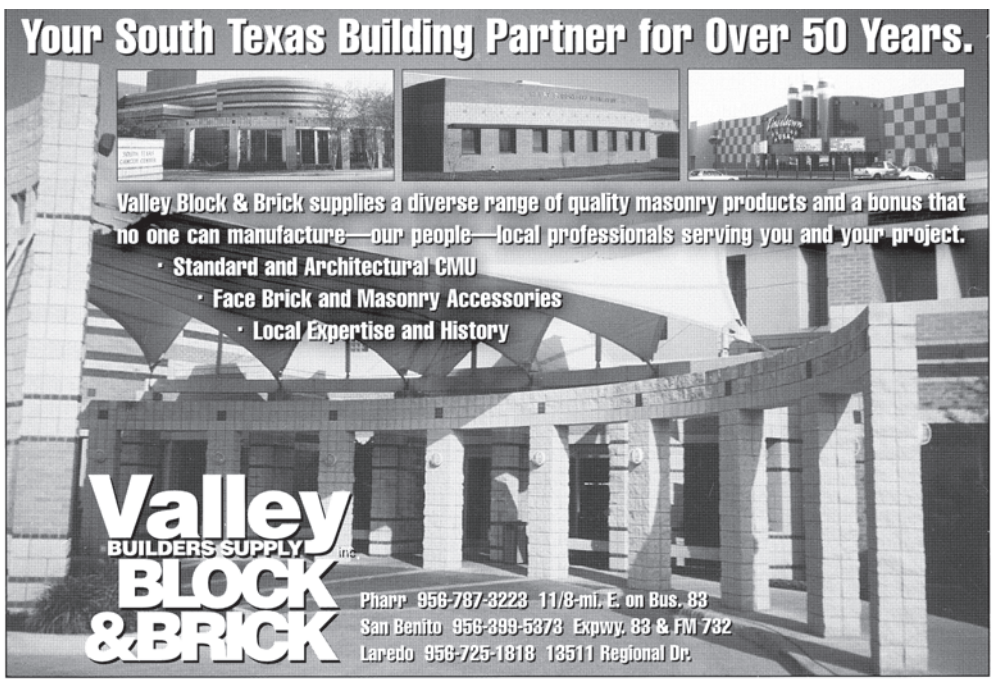

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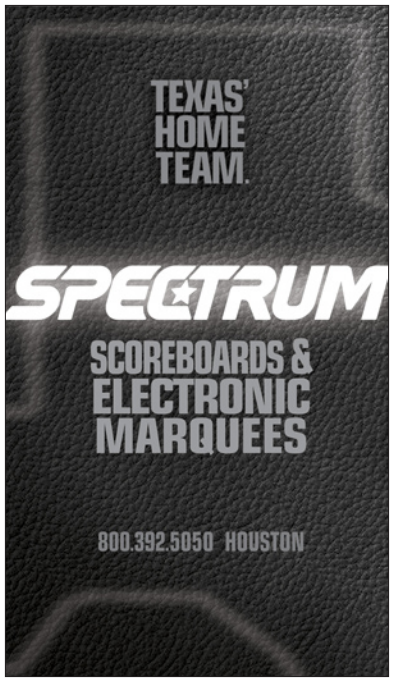

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CRAIG BLACKMON, AIA

GSR ANDRADE ARCHITECTS

CALL IT A REVOLVING CLASSROOM or education by rotation, the Endangered Species Carousel at the Dallas Zoo teaches children about animals threatened with extinction. The 36-foot-diameter custom merry-go-round opened last March and immediately proved to be a big hit. "It's very, very popular. They seem to love it, youngsters and adults alike, because they have never seen a carousel with anything other than horses on it," says Larry Randolph, the zoo's guest relations supervisor.

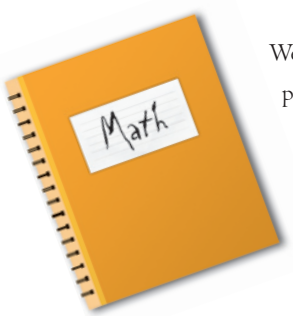
Among the 30 "jumpers" and "standers" are black and white rhinoceroses, a gorilla, and an okapi. (Native to the dense forests of West Africa, the imperiled *Okapia johnstoni* looks like a zebra, but its closest living relative is the giraffe). The okapi figure – shown above at far left – is unique, created specifically for the Dallas Zoo, recognized nationally for its successful okapi breeding program and behavioral research. Other exotic breeds in the spinning menagerie are a tiger, a lion, an ostrich, and an elephant. There's even an extinct species represented—a Triceratops, the crested and three-horned dinosaur.

The Dallas firm of GSR Andrade Architects worked with the client to design a pavilion to shelter the carousel, custom built for the zoo by Chance Rides of Wichita, Kansas. Located prominently on the zoo's entry plaza, the structure reflects Texas vernacular traditions with its metal roof and tapered columns clad in multicolored limestone. Built-in cedar benches provide parents a place to sit and watch their children play and learn.

STEPHEN SHARPE

Stephen Sharpe is editor of *Texas Architect*.

School Work.



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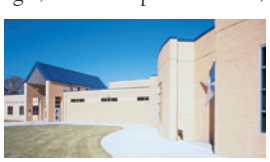

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